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Exploring the Potential of Developmental Project Work to Support Positive Change for Practice and Practitioners

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**WORKING AND LEARNING TOGETHER:
EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL OF DEVELOPMENTAL
PROJECT WORK TO SUPPORT POSITIVE CHANGE
FOR PRACTICE AND PRACTITIONERS**

KATHLEEN ANN CHIDGEY

A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

University of Bath

Department of Education

September 2012

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter numbers		Page
1	INTRODUCTION	11
1.1	THE RESEARCHER IN CONTEXT	12
1.1.1	Educational Contexts	12
1.1.2	Professional contexts	13
1.2	THE STUDY IN CONTEXT	13
1.3	GENERAL AIMS, FOCUS AND OBJECTIVES	14
1.3.1	Cultural and Historical Contexts and the Emerging Study	14
1.3.2	National Contexts and the Study	15
1.3.3	Local Contexts and the Study	15
1.3.4	Historical Contexts and the Study	16
1.4	STRUCTURING THE STUDY - DEVELOPING A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	17
1.4.1	Research Questions	17
1.5	STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF THE THESIS	18
1.6	ANTICIPATED CONTRIBUTION OF THE RESEARCH	19
2	DEVELOPING THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	21
2.1	THE STUDY AND DISCOURSE	21
2.1.1	Discourse: a Tool for Joint Working - 'Communicative Action'	21
2.1.2	Discourse: Evidence Gathering - Processes of Team Working	22
2.1.3	Discourse: Articulations of Multiple Perspectives - consensus and contradictions	22
2.1.4	Discourse: Tools for Reflection and Learning	23
2.2	DEVELOPING THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK - FIRST THOUGHTS	23
2.2.1	Considering the possibilities for using multiple theoretical perspectives	25
2.2.3	Approaches from Qualitative Research Methods	25
2.2.4	Approaches from Anthropology - 'thick accounts' and 'blurred genres'	26
2.3	DEVELOPING THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK - MOVING FORWARD	27
2.3.1	Cultural and Constructivist perspectives and identity	27
2.4	ACKNOWLEDGING THE VALUE OF USING UNIFIED THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	29
2.5	EXPANSIVE LEARNING: A UNIFIED THEORY FOR THE PRESENT STUDY	30
2.5.1	The Concept of 'Expansive Learning'	30
2.6	EXPANSIVE LEARNING AND CULTURAL THEORIES OF DEVELOPMENT	32
2.6.1	Social and Cultural Mediation and Learning	32
2.6.2	Learning and Development – the affect and emotional responses	32
2.6.3	Learning and Development – mediation	33
2.6.4	Learning and Development – social, cultural and historical	33
2.6.5	Concepts of mediation: semiotic and activity perspectives	34
2.6.6	The Zone of Proximal Development and Distributed Cognition	35
2.7	EXPANSIVE LEARNING AND OBJECT ORIENTED ACTION	36
2.7.1	Expansive Learning and Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT)	36
2.7.2	Cultural Historical Activity Theory and 'SUBJECT': individual perspectives and identity	37
2.7.3	Cultural Historical Activity Theory and OBJECT: Developmental Work Research (DWR)	38
2.8	EXPANSIVE LEARNING AND MEDIATION	40
2.8.1	Implicit and Explicit Mediation	40
2.8.2	Discursive mediation	41
2.8.3	Discourse as Communicative Action	42

2.8.4	Discourse: a cultural tool for distributed learning	42
2.9	EXPANSIVE LEARNING - INDIVIDUAL, COLLECTIVE AND COMMUNITY VOICES	43
2.9.1	Multiple voices	43
2.9.2	Discourse and Language: identity and power	44
2.9.3	Narratives of experience: individuals and the group	45
2.9.4	Relational Agency: ' <i>knowing how to know who</i> '.	45
2.9.5	Experience	45
2.9.6	The Study: Theoretical Groundings	46
3	METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS	47
3.1	ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	48
3.2	DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK	48
3.3	METAPHORS OF LEARNING	48
3.3.1	The 'Acquisition Metaphor of Learning': Transmission Models of Continuing Professional Development	49
3.3.2	The 'Participation Metaphor of Learning' Ethnography and Grounded Theories	50
3.3.3	'Knowledge-Creation Metaphor of Learning'.	51
3.3.4	Expansive Learning	52
3.3.5	Developmental Work Research	53
3.4	THE CASE STUDY	57
3.4.1	Research Questions	58
3.4.2	The Team	58
3.4.3	Team Meetings - Dialogues for change	59
3.5	THE RESEARCH STUDY – THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS	59
3.6	DISCOURSE – A RESEARCH TOOL	60
3.6.1	Discursive data and the study	60
3.6.2	Discourse: a cultural tool for distributed learning	61
3.7	CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES.	61
3.7.1	The Change Laboratory and Dual Stimulation	61
3.7.2	Discourse and Team Meetings – dialogues for change	63
3.7.3	Discourse and Developmental Work Research - Audio Data	64
3.7.4	Stimulus 1 – Computer / projector and screen setup	65
3.7.5	Stimulus 2 – Flip chart and contemporaneous minutes	66
3.7.6	Stimulus 3 - Ideas, artefacts and resources	67
3.8	DISCOURSE: A TOOL FOR NEGOTIATING MEANING, FOR BUILDING SHARED PURPOSE, AND FOR COMMUNICATIVE ACTION	67
3.8.1	Researcher perspectives of multiple roles: factors that constrain and support the team's work and the research process	68
3.8.2	Multiple dimensions within the researcher role	69
3.9	TEAM ROLES AND TEAM PERSPECTIVES	70
3.9.1	Narratives of Experience	71
3.9.2	Team perspectives: identity, change and professional development	71
3.9.3	Networking, boundary crossing and rule breaking	72
3.9.4	Relational agency	72
3.9.5	The team and the research: multiple purposes, multiple contexts, individual strengths and shared needs	73
3.9.6	Individuals, the Team and Community	74
3.9.7	Perspectives on the Team and its work	74

4	APPROACHES TO DATA ANALYSIS	76
4.1	QUALITATIVE APPROACHES TO ANALYSIS	76
4.1.1	Data Analysis and applications of the Theory of Expansive Learning	76
4.2	SOCIOCULTURAL PERSPECTIVES OF DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING	77
4.3	CULTURAL HISTORICAL ACTIVITY THEORY (CHAT)	78
4.4	MEDIATION: THE ROLE OF CULTURAL TOOLS	78
4.4.1	Discourse: a cultural tool for distributed learning	78
4.4.2	Discourse Analysis	79
4.4.3	Analysis of Discursive Action - D analysis	83
4.5	CHAT CONCEPTS OF 'SUBJECT': IDENTITY AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	85
4.5.1	Issues of Affect and Identity – Narratives of experience	86
4.6	OBJECT ORIENTED ACTIVITY – DEVELOPMENTAL WORK RESEARCH	86
4.6.1	Positioning, power and control: modes of working and learning within institutions	87
4.7	OVERVIEW OF CULTURAL APPROACHES TO ANALYSIS	87
4.8	QUANTITATIVE APPROACHES TO ANALYSIS	88
4.8.1	Quantitative Analysis of Discursive Data	89
4.8.2	Quantitative analysis of excerpts	90
4.9	OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY AND ANALYTIC STRANDS	90
4.9.1	Approaches to Analysis	90
5	THE TEAM AND RULES: CONSTRAINING AND SUPPORTING CONTEXTS	92
5.1	COMPLEX CONTEXTS: WELSH MEDIUM EDUCATION: PRIVILEGED & MARGINALISED	92
5.1.1	Historical Contexts – 2006/7	96
6	TEAMWORKING AND MEDIATION	99
6.1	TEAM MEETINGS – A TOOL FOR WORKING AND LEARNING TOGETHER	99
6.1.1	Dual stimulation and Change Laboratory a tool to support change for practitioners doing developmental project work	101
6.2	LANGUAGE: A CULTURAL TOOL FOR DISTRIBUTED LEARNING	103
6.2.1	The Team and Discursive Action	103
6.3	QUANTITATIVE APPROACHES TO ANALYSIS	104
6.3.1	Analysis of excerpts	106
6.3.2	Overview of trends of participation in key discussions	109
7	THE TEAM AND TEAM MEMBERS: SUBJECT POSITIONS	112
7.1	CHAT CONCEPTS OF 'SUBJECT': BOUNDARY CROSSING AND RULE BREAKING	112
7.1.1	Change and practice	113
7.1.2	'Departure' contributions in object oriented activity	114
7.1.3	Issues of affect	118
7.2	DISCOURSE AND LANGUAGE: IDENTITY AND POWER	119
7.2.1	Positioning Power and Control: working and learning within organisations	119
7.2.3	Developing as professionals: change and professional identity	120
7.3	QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF TEAM PERSPECTIVES BASED ON SHARED VALUES - KEY THEMES EMERGING FROM TEAM MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS	121
7.3.1	Mutual support of practitioners working through medium of Welsh.	121
7.3.2	Opportunities to work together in Welsh	122
7.3.3	Opportunities express views and take action - needs identification	122
7.3.4	Opportunities express views and take action - resourcing implications	123
7.3.5	Opportunities for working on self identified developmental project work	123
7.3.6	Individual and collective professional development	123

7.3.7	Opportunities to find a collective voice and confidence to express views	123
7.3.8	Networking - raising the profile of the team, recognition of skills and expertise	124
7.3.9	Opportunities to work to strengthen a marginal position – practitioners	124
7.3.10	Opportunities to work to strengthen a marginal position – practice	125
7.3.11	Opportunities to work to strengthen a marginal position - addressing inequalities	126
7.4	QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF TEAM PERSPECTIVES BASED ON SHARED VALUES	126
7.5	SUBJECT POSITIONS AND THE TEAM	129
8	OBJECTS OF TEAM WORKING: LEARNING AS CREATION OR CONSTRUCTION	131
8.1	OBJECT ORIENTED ACTIVITY AND THE TEAM	132
8.2	OBJECTS OF TEAM ACTIVITY	133
8.3	EMERGING OBJECTS OF TEAM ACTIVITY	134
8.4	OBJECT 1: BUILDING THE TEAM	136
8.4.1	Object 1.i: Becoming a team	136
8.4.2	Object 1.ii: Assuming roles and responsibilities	137
8.4.3	Object 1.iii Managing challenges, adversity and marginalisation	139
8.4.4	Object 1.iv: Thinking, working and learning together	140
8.4.5	Object 1.v: Becoming connected – Networking	141
8.5.6	Object 1.vi Being ambitious, embracing change and taking risks	143
8.6	OBJECT 2: CREATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF RESOURCES	144
8.6.1	Object 2.i: Developing resources - Oracy	145
8.6.2	Object 2.ii Reviewing published literacy resources	146
8.6.3	Object 2.iii Developing Resources – Literacy	150
8.7	EMERGING OBJECT A - FUNDING	152
8.8	EMERGING OBJECT B – PRACTITIONER DEVELOPMENT	154
8.9	EMERGING OBJECT C: KNOWING HOW TO KNOW OTHERS	156
8.9.1	Emerging Object Ci: Knowing how to know others – locally	156
8.9.2	Emerging Object Cii Knowing how to know others – regionally	158
8.9.3	Emerging Object Cii Knowing how to know others – nationally	158
8.10	OBJECT ORIENTED ACTIVITY IN THE PRESENT STUDY	160
9	THE TEAM, ITS WORK AND DIVISION OF LABOUR	161
9.1	THE TEAM AND DISTRIBUTED WORKING AND LEARNING - INDIVIDUAL STRENGTHS AND NEEDS	161
9.1.1	The team - multiple purposes, multiple contexts and multiple roles	163
9.2	RESEARCHER PERSPECTIVES – MULTIPLE ROLES IN DEVELOPMENTAL PROJECT WORK AND THE RESEARCH PROCESS	165
9.3	DIFFERENT BUT COMPLEMENTARY AIMS	168
10	THE TEAM IN CONTEXT – NOTIONS OF COMMUNITY	171
11	OUTCOMES OF TEAM WORKING	174
11.1	OUTCOMES OF THE TEAM'S WORK AT THE OUTSET OF THE PRESENT STUDY - OCTOBER 2007	174
11.2	OUTCOMES OF THE TEAM'S WORK AT THE END OF THE STUDY PERIOD - OCTOBER 2008	176
11.2.1	Team perspectives on the relationship between the team's work and the research	179
11.2.2	Partner perspectives of the team and its work	179
11.3	OUTCOMES OF THE TEAM'S WORK FOLLOWING THE STUDY PERIOD – SEPTEMBER 2010: REVIEWING THE WORK AT A TIME OF TRANSITION	181
11.4	EMERGING OUTCOMES OF THE TEAMS WORK	187

12	DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS: STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY, FUTURE ACTIONS AND PERSONAL REFLECTIONS	189
12.1	INTRODUCTION	189
12.2	DEVELOPMENTS AND TRANSFORMATIONS OF THEORY AND THEORISING AND THE STUDY	189
12.3	STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH STUDY	190
12.3.1	The study in context - advantages and disadvantages of taking a situated approach	190
12.4	STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF STUDY'S METHODOLOGY	192
12.4.1	Applications of Developmental Work Research and Change Laboratory	192
12.4.2	Outcomes of the team's work: validating past work and motivating future plans	194
12.4.3	Multiple researcher roles – balancing advantages and disadvantages	194
12.4.4	Processes of analysis – constraining and facilitating factors	196
12.4.5	Discursive approaches in Cultural Historical Activity Theory	196
12.4.6	Combining Qualitative and Quantitative approaches of analysis	197
12.4.7	Completing and reporting the work – delays and their consequences	197
12.5	CONTRIBUTION TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND PRACTICE	198
12.5.1	Strengths, limitations and applicability – further research and enquiry	198
12.6	CONCLUDING THOUGHTS: CHANGE AND THE PRACTICE OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY	198
	REFERENCES	200

TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure	Title	Page
Figure 1.1	OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH	11
Figure 1.2	OVERVIEW OF THESIS STRUCTURE	20
Figure 2.1	Sequence of learning actions on an expansive learning cycle (Engeström and Sannino, 2010, p. 8)	31
Figure 2.2	Mediational triangle (Cole, 1996. P.119)	33
Figure 2.3	Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) (Engeström, 1999)	36
Figure 2.4	Developmental Work Research: the formation of Mature Concepts	39
Figure 3.1	Three metaphors of learning (based on Paavola and Hakkarainen, 2005)	49
Figure 3.2	Sequence of learning actions on an expansive learning cycle (Engeström and Sannino, 2010, p. 8)	57 62
Figure 3.3	Engeström's prototypical Change Laboratory (2007, p. 371)	
Figure 3.4	Team meeting set up (adapted from Engeström, 2007, p.371)	64
Figure 3.5	Researcher roles in the present study	69
Figure 3.6	Combining roles: the researcher role in 3-dimensions	70
Figure 3.7	Complementary Aims	73
Figure 3.8	Eliciting the views of partners about the team and its work	74
Figure 4.1	Analysis and Discussion – thesis chapters	91
Figure 6.1	Attendance of individual team members	105
Figure 7.1	Object 1: Building the Team	115
Figure 7.2	Team perspectives on the value of working together	121
Figure 7.3	Overview of team perspectives on the value of working together	127
Figure 7.4	Sequence of learning actions on an expansive learning cycle (Engeström and Sannino, 2010, p. 8)	130
Figure 8.1	Team perspectives on the value of working together	132
Figure 9.1	Sequence of learning actions on an expansive learning cycle (Engeström and Sannino, 2010, p. 8)	161
Figure 9.2	Multiple Researcher Role	166
Figure 9.3	Complementary Aims	169
Figure 11.1	Review of the team's work - October 2007	175
Figure 11.2	Review of the team's work - October 2008	177
Figure 11.3	Sample pages from first 12 Structured Reading Texts	178
Figure 11.4	Sample pages from website – animated versions of structured texts and associated games	178
Figure 11.5	Sequence of learning actions on an expansive learning cycle (Engeström and Sannino, 2010, p. 8)	184
Figure 11.6	Review of the team's work – September 2010 S	186
Figure 11.7	Sample Pages from published Structured Reading Texts	187

TABLE OF CHARTS

Chart	Title	Page
Chart 6.1	Meeting 2 – Planning priorities for resources and networking	106
Chart 6.2	Meeting 5 – Considering priorities for next steps funding / resources / networking following advice from Welsh Assembly Government Officer	107
Chart 6.3	Meeting 7 – Reviewing prints of initial 12 books	107
Chart 6.4	Meeting 8 – Planning for joint work with National Grid for Learning (Wales)	108
Chart 6.5	Meeting 10 – September 2010 – Reviewing the team's work	108
Chart 6.6	Team member turns as a percentage of the total number of turns	109
Chart 6.7	Difference between the lowest – highest participator (percentage points)	110
Chart 6.8	Average turns/ minute by excerpt	110
Chart 7.1	Team perspectives on the value of working together	128

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ABSTRACT

WORKING AND LEARNING TOGETHER: EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL OF DEVELOPMENTAL PROJECT WORK TO SUPPORT POSITIVE CHANGE FOR PRACTICE AND PRACTITIONERS

Aspirations for equality between the English and Welsh languages are widely held in Wales although Welsh is spoken by a minority of the population. Practitioners working through the medium of Welsh face particular challenges which include shortages of resources and limited access to support from Welsh speaking professionals. This thesis describes an intervention over time to strengthen the marginal position of a team of practitioners whose practice takes place through the medium of the Welsh language.

Drawing on discursive evidence gathered in a series of team meetings conducted through the medium of Welsh the case study explores the potential of developmental project work to provide a context within which to effect change for practice, professional development and professional identity. The research is grounded in Engeström's theory of expansive learning and uses methodology based on Vygotsky's notion of dual stimulation. Forms of discourse analysis is applied to transcripts and textual records of the communicative action of the team.

The study charts trajectories of change for the team and team members occurring during the study and beyond. Outcomes have included the establishment of self directed working practices in the development of resources which are valued by local, regional, national and commercial colleagues. The study provides an illustration of how this interventionist approach to support practitioners apply and extend their knowledge and expertise in developmental project work also contributed to professional development through reconstructions of professional identity.

1: INTRODUCTION

This thesis provides an account of a case study undertaken to explore the potential of developmental project work to support developments for practice and as vehicle for facilitating the professional development of practitioner teams. The work was undertaken within the context of my professional role as a Welsh-speaking educational psychologist for a local authority in north-east Wales with practitioners working within the Welsh sector of provision. The initial case study which combined doctoral research processes with my professional responsibility of the application of psychology to support provision for learning in the authority is outlined in the figure below. The figure also provides an overview of the times frames involved.

Figure 1.1 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH

TIME FRAME	PROFESSIONAL ACTIONS	RESEARCH ACTIONS
2006/2007	Local authority educational psychologist. Induction into the Welsh-medium practitioner team.	Observing team processes, responding to team priorities, considering alternatives, mediating change. Establish self directed developmental project work.
2007/2008 The Study	Continue to act as link EP to Welsh-medium / bilingual schools	Undertake literature review / establish methodology. Undertake 'system's minder' (Denny2005) role. Convene 9 monthly meetings conducted in Welsh. Apply developmental work research methodology based on CHAT (Engeström, 2007) Conduct individual interview with team members. Gather audio/ textual discursive evidence.
2008/2009	Continue to act as link EP to Welsh-medium / bilingual schools. Act as 'system's minder' and to co-ordinate meetings and intervening work.	Undertake preliminary analysis of textual evidence. Transcription/ translation of interview data / team meetings audio data Complete transfer paper and seminar.
2009/2010	Continue to act as 'system's minder' and to co-ordinate monthly meetings and intervening work.	Continue transcription/translation of audio data from study. Co-ordinate team's work in joint projects with national and commercial bodies. Establish structure of thesis, write initial draft.
2010/2012	Discontinue direct work with and for team. <i>n.b. The team continue to work independently in partnerships with local, regional, national and commercial bodies including publication of resources on the internet and as a set of 50 structured reading texts and in disseminating their work at national conferences and media platforms.</i>	Co-ordinate a review of team's work and emerging change using CHAT. Complete transcription/translation Complete quantitative analysis of shifts in participation. Complete discourse analysis to establish trajectories of change emerging in and as a result of the study. Write, review and submit thesis.

1.1 THE RESEARCHER IN CONTEXT

1.1.1 Educational Contexts

The present research builds on, and aims to extend a longstanding and continuing interest in learning and how it may be facilitated. My studies in both education and child development have contributed to understandings of learning as actively constructed (Piaget, 1926, 1995) and social (Vygotsky 1978, 1987). Studies in psychology and educational psychology brought encounters with theories of human experience and development. For instance constructivist principles informed developments for practice, particularly with reference to ways in which understandings of the world are understood to be 'constructed' as a response to experience. A lively interest in exploring how individual perspectives and personal constructs influence the perceptions, actions and reactions of individuals, their interactions with others, and the dynamic interplay between the two continues to inform my practice.

Opportunities to explore sociocultural psychology with its emphasis on learning as being both mediated and situated by culture contributed to further professional development where ideas about how learning can be understood as human action mediated by cultural tools within social, cultural and historical contexts have been particularly informative. (Vygotsky, 1978 and 1987). Cultural Historical Activity Theory perspectives where learning is orientated towards 'objects of activity' (Engeström, 1999) have informed understandings of the interdependence of action, activity and context in practice to promote learning. Emerging understandings include work to apply concepts of 'Expansive Learning' (Engeström and Sannino, 2010) to practice, where learning is understood to be creative action in which understandings and knowledge are created in the processes of learning.

Notions of Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) and Expansive Learning informed an earlier study which formed a part of my training as an educational psychologist (Chidgey, 2005). In that study I investigated the role of dialogues in educational psychology (EP) practice. Consultation meetings which are facilitated by EPs aim to mediate shared understandings and agreements. Consultation participants may include learners, parents and practitioners from within education and also from other agencies. The study explored how EP consultations engendered change through negotiations of shared understandings and agreed action plans. It highlighted that the success of meetings depended on effective communication in which discourse mediates the learning which takes place. It also highlighted the

value of the application of discursive theory to research about how groups of individuals can work and learn together.

My educational and professional experiences thus far had provided opportunities to consider the usefulness of frameworks based on multiple theoretical paradigms which informed considerations of multiple perspectives on human action. Because of this I had expected that the present study would also draw on a similar framework. In fact, early work on the literature review for this study would highlight the limitations of this for the present study. This was because this work would centre on forms of learning where what was to be learned needed to be created before it could be learned. After a series of false starts and many setbacks I would recognise that the notions underpinning Engeström's (1987) theory of expansive learning could provide a theoretical framework with which to examine learning in the study. Engeström and Sannino (2010) suggest that in expansive learning participants are understood to work together to create that which needs to be learned and that this learning comes about in response to the unique needs of practice. They stress that in such contexts the processes of learning are qualitatively different from classical notions of learning which assume that learning consists of the mastery of existing bodies of knowledge.

1.1.2 Professional contexts

The personal understandings of theory described above had not only emerged in the course of academic study over time but had also been considered and examined through the lens of practice and developed, refined and integrated with 'on the job' learning. Understandings emerging from observation, experimentation and reflection as an individual practitioner, in community with colleagues, and also with co-workers from other agencies have provided valuable opportunities and incentives to extend and develop my practice and further my understandings of my practice. Such development which took place informally in the context of my 'day job' would, in turn, be augmented formally through participation in training courses and through research projects which include the present study.

1.2 THE STUDY IN CONTEXT

Joining the team at a local authority in north east Wales as a member of their educational psychology service presented opportunities for participation in the authority's provision of education through the medium of Welsh. In addition, it provided opportunities to extend my explorations of processes of learning within teams of practitioners. Furthermore, it provided a context within which to explore the potential of developmental project work as a vehicle for professional learning and

professional development. Specifically, I became a member of a team of welsh-medium primary phase practitioners working together to support the learning of pupils with additional learning needs within that sector.

Initial observations suggested that practitioners working through the medium of Welsh experienced isolation from colleagues working through the medium of English. Observations also suggested that practitioners working through the medium of Welsh encountered difficulties associated with working within a minority language despite the fact that Welsh is notionally the national language of the country of Wales.

My work as educational psychologist for these practitioners raised my awareness of the implications of marginalising pressures for practice in schools and for practitioners. My observations highlighted how working through the medium of Welsh, a minority language, within an organisation where business is primarily conducted in English presents particular challenges, because the language used by the majority developed currency as the 'authoritative discourse' (Bakhtin, 1981).

The present study's aim would be to take an interventionist approach to resolve problems identified by this team of practitioners. Specifically the approach would be to use developmental project work to address shortages of appropriate resources for children learning through the medium of Welsh in general, and particularly for learners who have additional learning needs. The study would also aim to examine developmental project work as a potential tool for exploring and meeting the professional development needs of the team.

1.3 GENERAL AIMS, FOCUS AND OBJECTIVES

This section provides a brief introduction to the general aims, focus and objectives of the present study including the main research questions. An account of the cultural and historical contexts from which the study emerged will be provided. A brief account of how the research is grounded in theoretical frameworks will set the scene and prepare the ground for a thorough consideration of the theoretical frameworks underpinning the study and its methodological requirements to be presented in Chapters 2 and 3 respectively.

1.3.1 Cultural and historical contexts and the emerging study

The present study emerged from and within the specific context described above. It would aim to study the team's work within one school year and the implications of this work for practice. The study would also seek to elucidate how developmental

project work may contribute to professional learning for the team and for individuals. My own development would be considered at multiple levels including as team member, as a team facilitator, and as researcher. The study would also consider how the work and its outcomes are perceived by team members and by others, within the authority and beyond. It would be positioned within national, local and historical contexts.

1.3.2 National contexts and the study

The right to access services in Welsh is enshrined in the Welsh Language Act of 1993 which also stipulates the right of parents to choose welsh-medium education for their children. A key Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) aspiration is to promote greater bilingualism.

'In a truly bilingual Wales both Welsh and English will flourish and will be treated as equal. A bilingual Wales means a country where people can choose to live their lives through the medium of either or both languages; a country where the presence of two national languages and cultures is a source of pride and strength to us all'. (WAG, 2002, p.6)

Accordingly, the Welsh language is protected by legislation. It is also highly valued in social, cultural and economic contexts in Wales even though the proportion of the population making regular use of the Welsh language is small and currently at about 20 percent.

1.3.3 Local contexts and the study

The position within the local authority reflects national trends. It aims to extend its provision of Welsh-medium education as part of its commitment to the Welsh language. Its approach to meeting its statutory obligations relating to bilingualism is outlined in its Revised Welsh Language Scheme (2011) which articulates the authority's commitment to the provision of Welsh-medium schools to:

'Promote equality of opportunity for children and young people to become bilingual and to promote the Welsh culture'. (op.cit. p.5)

The same document reports that:

The Council recently commissioned research into the demand by parents in the county for Welsh medium education. The evidence collated identified that 67% of respondents believed that their child would benefit from Welsh medium education, and 89% would like their child to be able to speak Welsh ...' and is '...undertaking a feasibility study to determine where additional accommodation could be sited. (op.cit. p.5-6)

Nevertheless, at present a majority of the authority's seventy schools operate primarily through the medium of English where provision for learning Welsh is that of an additional language. In five primary schools the first language for both

instructional and administrative purposes was Welsh, and two schools made bilingual provision in parallel Welsh and English streams.

1.3.4 Historical contexts and the study

The present project emerged from an earlier project jointly co-ordinated by the local authority's educational psychologist service and the learning support team. The stated aim of the original project had been to review and develop strategies of support for children with additional needs in the local authority's five Welsh-medium schools which it was recognised face particular challenges. The project focused on Headteacher perspectives in the first instance but this had been extended to involve special educational needs co-ordinators (SENCOs).

I had been made aware that the local authority's aim had been to support the group to develop greater levels of independence and provide a mutual support for one another. Provision included meetings convened and directed by local authority officers based on assessments of the training needs and interests of the team in ways which, in my opinion, positioned practitioners as consumers and reduced their active involvement in planning and decision making about future directions. My observations raised questions about whether the provision being offered to the team had the potential to achieve these aims where classic transmission based training opportunities only were offered. This caused me to question whether such provision might be more likely to perpetuate dependence as opposed to promoting confidence and independence. It also caused me to reflect on the potential limitations of content based continuing professional development (CPD) training programs for practitioners facing specific challenges which do not take those challenges into account.

I was in attendance, as a new member of the team, during the meeting in which a colleague proposed that the team work together to address aspects of practice through a self identified specific developmental project. This significant departure was the turning point from which the present study emerged. The team's interest in and commitment to the developmental project mooted during that first meeting suggested that it might be possible to participate in the team's processes with a view to engendering qualitative change for the team's work, for their relationship with the local authority, and also to facilitate individual and team professional development. In positing a self identified project, the team had indirectly challenged the local authority's rationale for provision to meet their professional and developmental needs.

Crucially, local authority officers directing the project welcomed this proactive approach. Following this departure the authority agreed to continue funding to support termly meetings by meeting the cost of releasing members from their schools, and by extending the team to include practitioners from the authority's two bilingual schools.

Over the course of the study the project team would comprise 10 practitioners including 7 special education needs co-ordinators (SENCo), 2 special needs teachers (SNT), and 1 educational psychologist (EP). Five of the SENCos worked in Welsh-medium schools and 2 in bilingual schools. My own role as researcher was undertaken in addition to my role as educational psychologist linked to the Welsh-medium and bilingual schools.

1.4 STRUCTURING THE STUDY - DEVELOPING A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The present study would aim to investigate the learning of this team of Welsh-medium practitioners in the context of developmental project work in collaborative creative partnerships to support positive change for practice. The study would focus on the team's work to mitigate specific challenges encountered in the context of their daily work. The work would reflect the interests, specialisms and shared vision of the team. It would also consider the potential of developmental project working to bring about change for practice and to support professional development for the team as a whole and also for individual team members.

1.4.1 Research questions

The study's title, 'Working and Learning Together: exploring the potential of developmental project work to support positive change for practice and practitioners' seeks to offer a succinct description of the main purpose of the inquiry. The central research question of the present study would be:

Why take an interventionist research approach to planning and effecting change in educational practice and what are the benefits for practitioners?

The study's aim would be to explore team and individual perspectives about the impact of joint working on self identified projects emerging from challenges encountered in practice. Additional research questions would be framed with a view to providing opportunities for explorations of how development project work may contribute to practical outcomes e.g. the creation of appropriate resource to support their work in schools.

The study would also aim to explore whether developmental project working in teams could be an effective strategy for professional development. It would consider the potential of developmental project work for strengthening a marginal position, to raise the profile of the team, to enhance the professional identity of individual team members and to explore ways in which the processes of the team's work would be supportive of team development.

The present study would aim to chart teamwork in a new phase of working towards targets and goals identified and prioritised by the team. It would also provide a context in which to pursue my interest in the processes of learning. Elucidating the multiple roles of discourse in developmental project working for change would be of particular interest. Accordingly discursive issues would be relevant at many levels in the study. In the first instance the team are defined by their use of a minority, though privileged, language. In addition, the purpose of developmental project work undertaken by the team would be to develop resources to support practice for learners learning through the medium of Welsh. Furthermore, team work processes are discursive in nature. Case study evidence gathered would also be discursive and would require discursive forms of analysis.

The theoretical framework adopted would need to support examinations of social activity associated with learning grounded in cultural and historical contexts and, at the same time, would address interpersonal aspects of the joint working. It would also need to support the examination of team members' perspectives and the factors which would act as drivers for developmental project work. The study would aim to canvass the perspectives of local, regional and national partners about the work and its implications for practice and also for the team. These views would include perspectives about professional identity for the team as a whole, and also for individual members. Theoretical groundings for the research study in which multiple strands may be integrated, investigated and described would be provided by the concept of expansive learning (Engeström and Sannino, 2010).

1.5 STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF THE THESIS

Chapter 2 will outline the theoretical framework within which the study would be located. In Chapter 3 methodological and ethical considerations will be described. Chapter 4 will explore the approaches which would be used in the analysis of the study's data based on the theoretical and methodological considerations outline, how the theoretical framework would interact with methodological considerations in the

choice of analytical approaches and which would furnish the evidence with which to discuss the outcomes of the work.

Chapters 5 to 11 will describe aspects of the team working. Chapter 5 will examine how the team functions within cultural and historical contexts, the rules that govern them and how they may constrain and support its work. Chapter 6 will provide a discussion of the cultural tools which would mediate the team's developmental project work. Chapter 7 will explore the team and individual team members and how the work has effected change for their practice and its impact on their professional development particularly with respect to questions of professional identity, efficacy and well being.

Chapter 8 will look at the objects of the team's work, the drivers that have inspired the team's work and how they have developed and extended over time. Chapter 9 will focus on the division of labour in the team's work. Chapter 10 will examine the team within social contexts including geographical and temporal issues - community - and Chapter 11 will provide an account of the outcomes emerging from the team's work and the study. Chapter 12 will review the thesis, its strengths and limitations and its contribution to the field of education research and the implications for further research and enquiry.

1.6 ANTICIPATED CONTRIBUTION OF THE RESEARCH

Discussions of the anticipated contribution of the research have been addressed in context throughout this chapter. For ease of reference a summary is provided below.

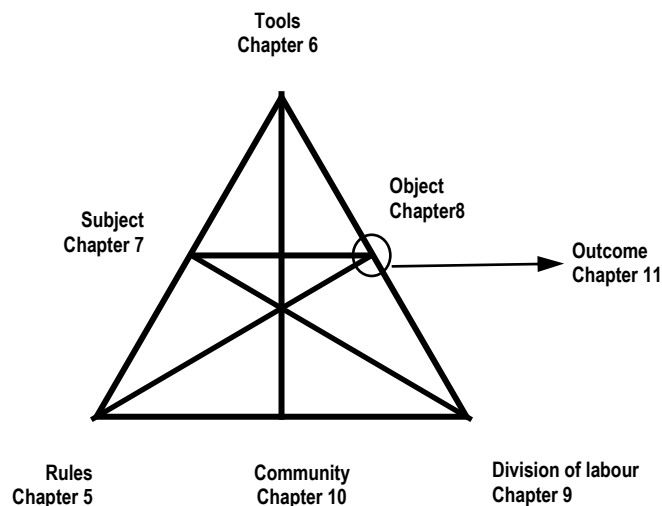
It was anticipated that the research would contribute:

- understandings about how developmental work may contribute to the professional development of individuals within the team to strengthen their marginal position;
- understandings about the potential of developmental work as an effective form of professional development and organisational learning;
- understandings about processes that support the development resources to facilitate practice in Welsh-medium primary settings;
- a model for educational psychologist / school practitioners joint work to support systemic change for practice and practitioners;
- understandings of how discursive approaches may be used in research grounded in Cultural Historical Activity Theory using a Developmental Work Research approach;

- an account of how Vygotsky's notion of 'dual stimulation', as utilised in Engeström's (2007) 'Change Laboratory' approach, may be applied to the work of a group of practitioners working on developmental projects; and
- an exploration of interplay between multiple researcher roles and considerations of how they may support and /or constrain research processes in the present study.

The discursive action of the team in its different forms would provide a tool to mediate joint working. Investigations of how such activity could contribute to professional development and extend the skills, knowledge and confidence - professional identity - of members would be central in the study. The combined researcher roles would aim to enhance the team's progress towards its own identified aims and objectives, at the same time as developing understandings which elucidate whether developmental project work may be a tool for supporting positive change for both practice and practitioners and might provide an alternative or additional strand to more conventional in-service training approaches.

Figure 1.2 OVERVIEW OF THESIS STRUCTURE



2: DEVELOPING THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The present study would take the form of a case study to examine the work of a team of educational practitioners engaged in developmental project work. Team members work within and for Welsh-medium education in a local authority in north east Wales. Team projects would share the overarching objective to engender positive change for practice to support learners in the sector. Team members would view projects as 'works-in-progress' - joint activity orientated towards objects emerging from problems encountered in practice and particularly in provision for learners with additional learning needs. The team's activity would centre on the pursuit of general goals to engender positive change for practice where specific projects emerge as responses to particular challenges.

2.1 THE STUDY AND DISCOURSE

In the Introduction I outlined how discursive contexts would have particular relevance in the present study. For instance, the team face problems associated with working through the medium of a minority language occupying a marginal position within the local authority because of this. Differences of perspective and divisions between Welsh and non-Welsh speakers within the authority may be exacerbated by perceptions that the language and those who speak it occupy a privileged position. The team's work would generally be discursive in nature and take the form of monthly meetings and liaison with local, regional and national partners. The study would consider the discursive evidence gathered using forms of discourse analysis to structure reflection and review, and to discuss and report the conclusions of the study.

2.1.1 Discourse: a tool for joint working - 'communicative action'

Edwards and Potter (1992, p.153) suggest that the study of discourse provides not only a rich source of qualitative evidence and a framework for its analysis, but also a means with which to consider perspectives about the interactive communicative activity occurring between participants, where conversational records of events perform communicative, interactional work. Mercer (2000, p.15) suggests that language is a tool for joint intellectual activity, a means for thinking together to jointly create knowledge and understanding. From a discursive perspective language is viewed as a dialogic tool for distributed working, learning, reflection and research. In addition, team members practice within a minority language and team processes would occur in meetings where the primary tool for joint working was talk. Because of this discursive theory would perform key functions in the study's methodology.

Communicative action occurring between team members would be viewed as a tool for thinking and thinking about thinking. Examinations of such activity would play a central part in the study as a way to extend understandings of the team, its work and the outcomes of its work.

2.1.2 Discourse: evidence gathering - processes of team working

Team processes would be primarily undertaken in monthly meetings. During meetings object-oriented activity would be mediated by the team's discourse and evidence would be gathered which would include audio recordings and transcriptions. Contemporaneous shared minutes, working documents compiled using a flip chart format, would provide visual data and offer opportunities for ongoing review, data to support and stimulate reflection, discussion and debate and ultimately provide evidence of the processes of team working. Methodological considerations are to be discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

2.1.3 Discourse: Articulations of multiple perspectives - consensus and contradictions

Team members undertake a range of functions and fulfil a variety of professional roles within the local authority. Each team member would have their own personal professional history, identity, expertise and interests and the team's work would reflect these multiple perspectives. The work of becoming an effective team would require individual team members to find ways to develop shared understandings and to achieve consensus. This would present significant challenges and be central to the team's work. Positive working relationships would be developed in the course of the work as members accepted notions of developmental working. Evidence from team meetings would highlight how members become increasingly willing to work to their strengths and to undertake aspects of team's work which called for skills within their own area of expertise.

Evidence would highlight how the diversity of interests would lead to disagreements and even conflict which could have the potential to disrupt the work. The team would express initial disquiet that such departures from consensual working and concern that they might overwhelm team processes. However experience would show that such disruptions presented challenges only in the short-term, and moreover, often led to creative re-evaluations and positive shifts of perspectives which would tend to facilitate positive change. It was anticipated that the development of positive team relationships, mutual trust and respect would emerge as a result of this active work

which would also raise team member confidence in the team, its processes and in one another.

Discontinuities and contradictions would be experienced as a result of external pressures, particularly with respect to the funding required to release members to attend meetings. Potential funding bodies would impose external conditions on the team which would be experienced as constraints and distractions from internally agreed objectives. However, emerging evidence would highlight how some of these activities presented unforeseen opportunities and benefits.

2.1.4 Discourse: tools for reflection and learning

One of the aims of the present case study would be to investigate whether open-ended developmental project work could offer potential as an effective approach for the achievement of change for practice locally. Another would be to investigate whether developmental project working could engender change for participating practitioners as individuals and therefore be viewed as a tool for professional development.

The present study would aim to investigate how the team would work and learn together in collaborative, creative partnerships engaged in developmental project work geared to support change for practice. It would explore how the team would work together on objects which reflect the interests, expertise and shared understandings of team members and which emerge from challenges they face within the context of their daily work. It would address the challenges and benefits of multiple levels of team working and development including ways in which individual team members would undertake multiple roles and responsibilities within the work.

I have described the importance of discourse in the present study. I now present an account of the theoretical and methodological considerations reviewed for planning, conducting and evaluating the study in relation to discursive issues described above, and the literature review which informed the processes.

2.2 DEVELOPING THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK - FIRST THOUGHTS

The study's title, 'Working and learning together: exploring the potential of developmental project work to support positive change for practice and practitioners' seeks to offer a succinct description of the main purpose of the inquiry. The central research question of the present study is:

Why take an interventionist research approach to planning and effecting change in educational practice and what are the benefits for practitioners?

The study's aim would be to explore team and individual perspectives about the impact of joint working on self identified projects emerging from challenges they encounter in their practice using Developmental Work Research approaches (Engeström, 2007; Daniels and Edwards, 2010). The research questions would be framed with a view to providing opportunities for exploring how developmental project work may contribute to practical outcomes e.g. the creation of appropriate resource to support their work in schools.

The study would also aim to explore whether developmental project working in teams can be an effective strategy for professional development. It would consider the potential of participation in developmental work projects to strengthen a marginal position, to raise the profile of the team, and to enhance the professional identity of individual team members. The study would also aim to explore the processes of team working and team development at multiple levels including how individual team members undertake multiple roles and responsibilities within the team's work as a whole.

During the early planning phase of the research study my reflections centred on the research questions and their implications for the selection of a theoretical framework for the work, its methodology and ultimately the analysis. Inevitably my reflections drew on the theoretical perspectives that had informed my professional development. My experience in the field of education spans nearly thirty years and has included teaching and senior management roles in schools and, more recently work as an Educational Psychologist for local authorities in both England and Wales. The period has been a time of great change in education, driven in part by government policy for curricula, accountability, school improvement and safeguarding. During this period I have maintained my professional development through reflective practice. This has included a developing awareness of how psychology may be applied to teaching and learning and, in particular, the application of discursive and cultural psychological perspectives to these contexts. The focus of my work has always been to promote and extend opportunities for learning; whether for individuals or at the level of the organisation; for school pupils or practitioners; or through direct or indirect interventions. The present study would be no exception to this.

As described above, the study's aim would be to explore whether an interventionist approach to planning and effecting change in educational practice could engender positive learning outcomes for practice and practitioners. My expectation had been that theoretical considerations underpinning the present study would highlight the importance of discursive theory to applications of cultural theory where the interplay between constructivist and cultural perspectives might inform understandings of individual and collective team perspectives and their implications for the work. Because of this I expected that the study's theoretical framework would draw on the strengths of each of these paradigms just as the interplay between applications of discursive, cultural and constructivist theoretical perspectives had informed and extended my own thinking. I believed that my account of the present study would likewise be built on those same multiple theoretical perspectives.

2.2.1 Considering the possibilities for using multiple theoretical perspectives

Accordingly, I began my literature review with searches for accounts of studies grounded in paradigms derived from multiple theoretical approaches. I considered approaches from qualitative research methods and from anthropology. These approaches drew on constructivist perspectives in ways which appeared to offer potential for managing questions of multiple perspectives and individual differences at the heart of the study.

2.2.3 Approaches from qualitative research methods

In their examination of qualitative research methods Denzin and Lincoln (2005a) argue that qualitative research emphasises the need to consider multiple perspectives and multiple influences, and the applicability of multiple methods. They use the term 'bricoleur' to describe how multiple approaches and methods may be combined in studies and where researchers exercise '*...a choice of practice, that is pragmatic, strategic and self reflexive*' (2005, p.4) and where multiple perspectives and methods may be deployed, citing Nelson 1992, (2005, p.7) '*...qualitative research is many things at the same time. It is multi-paradigmatic in focus.*' Denzin and Lincoln suggest that a 'bricoleur' stance in research offers an approach to validation with the notion of 'triangulation', which they describe as:

'...an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question ...that objective reality can never be captured... a thing is known only through its representations' (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p.5).

Richardson and St Pierre (2005, p.963) build on this, taking the argument a step further when they suggest that the metaphor 'crystallisation' may be used to consider

how simultaneous displays of multiple refracted realities which acknowledge competing views of context may offer helpful descriptions of research data.

While general notions of 'bricoleur', 'triangulation' and 'crystallisation' appeared to offer potential insights relating to methodology and analysis within a more structured theoretical framework, I was not able to build a sufficiently secure framework for anchoring the present study using these notions and widened my search to include applications of theory in the field of anthropology. Denzin and Lincoln (2005, p.17) acknowledge the influence of the anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973, 1983) in their ideas of multiple perspectives, multiple influences, and the applicability of multiple perspectives and I examined the work of Geertz for potential theoretical frameworks in which to ground the study.

2.2.4 Approaches from Anthropology - 'thick accounts' and 'blurred genres'

Geertz (1973) argues that anthropology should abandon experimental science approaches in favour of interpretive approaches in the search for '*explication ... construing social expressions (which) on their surface (are) enigmatical*', and where what constitutes data is understood to be '*constructions of other people's constructions of what they and their compatriots are up to*' (1973, p.9). He suggests that the development of interpretative theories of culture necessitate a tool which he named 'thick description'. Geertz described 'thick accounts' as, '*...a multiplicity of complex conceptual structures, many of them superimposed upon or knotted into one another, which are at once strange, irregular, and inexplicit...*' and which must be grasped and then rendered as, '*...transient examples of shaped behaviour*' (1973, p. 9). He offers the following example of thick description of social discourse which is '*... inscribed ... written down ... so that ... a passing event which exists only in its own moment of occurrence ...*' becomes an account '*...which exists in its inscriptions and can be reconsidered*' (1973, p.19).

Geertz argues that the purpose of an interpretative theory of culture is to allow access to the conceptual world of others to 'converse' with them. He acknowledges that such theoretical formulations must inevitably be closely enmeshed with the contexts to which they are applied. In ethnography, he argues, the role of theory is to provide a '*...vocabulary in which what symbolic action has to say about itself can be expressed*' (1973, p.27), and concludes that:

'...the essential vocation of interpretive anthropology is not to answer our deepest questions, but to make available to us answers that others ... have given, and thus to include them in the consultable record of what man has said' (1973, p.30).

Geertz (1983) broaches the notion of 'blurred genres' as a way for social science to approach interpretative studies of culture by drawing on approaches and tools which have tended to be used in other disciplines. He suggests that in an interpretative theory of culture, systems of analysis should be viewed as constructions which instead of adopting more positivist scientific approaches take interpretive approaches. In this way Geertz suggests that the '*...lines grouping scholars together into intellectual communities*' (1983, p.24) necessarily separate them each from another in way which raise barriers to developing understandings of human social and cultural life and that complex juxtapositions of diverse ideas which may either challenge or complement one another is likely to be more supportive of progress.

Whilst these ideas chimed with my own observations of practice and appeared to offer significant potential for describing the outcomes of the research, I struggled to find in them sufficient scope for the construction a theoretical framework to meet the purposes of the present study's research questions. This review highlighted how adopting a robust theoretical framework derived from multiple paradigms would be problematic.

The study's research aimed to investigate the potential of developmental project work emerging from creative partnerships where individual perspectives, history and development are shared and contribute to emerging shared understandings and lead to joint decisions about the objects of team working. Because of this I was keen to locate a theoretical framework which would foreground the insights about individual perspectives and identity which I had previously encountered in readings of constructivist theory, to support considerations of perspectives which reflect the history, experience and interests of individual members of the team.

2.3 DEVELOPING THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK - MOVING FORWARD

A solution to this apparent impasse emerged from explorations of literature drawn from cultural perspectives which highlighted how the ideas which I had initially encountered within the constructivist paradigm were also to be found within cultural perspectives. Two examples of particular relevance to the present study encouraged me to review my initial preference for a multiple theoretical approach in favour of theoretical perspectives drawn from the cultural paradigm.

2.3.1 Cultural and constructivist perspectives and identity

The first of these appears in an account provided by Holland et al. (1998) of how cultural and constructivist perspectives may be viewed as being complementary with

one another based on their definition of the concept of identity as: '*...the intimate or personal world with the collective space of cultural forms and social relations*', where identities are '*...important bases from which people create new activities, new worlds, and new ways of being*' (1998, p.5). They consider how identity includes attention to ways in which persons are malleable, changeable and subject to discursive powers, as well as how they are generative with the capacity to imagine and create new ways of being. They suggest that persons may be viewed as:

'...composites of many, often contradictory, self understandings and identities, whose loci are often not confined to the body but ... spread over the materials and social environment and few of which are completely durable.' (1998, p.8)

Holland et al suggest that viewed from extreme culturalist positions, individuals may be seen to act as bearers of culture which inform their action in the world. At the same time they propose that when viewed from extreme constructivist positions, individuals may be understood as responding within the parameters of their constructions of events. They conclude that while in theory, constructivist and culturalist perspectives may be considered as being theoretically and analytically distinct; in practice human actions are likely to be informed by their 'dialogic nature' (1998, p.15), '*...the ability to hold multiple and mixed thoughts and feelings at any one time*'. Ultimately they argue that constructivist and culturalist positions may best be considered as being at either end of a continuous field. This position recognises multiple perspectives within and between individuals and the interplay between constructivist and cultural paradigms and how each may be considered within cultural perspectives. I began to see how such a characterisation might offer a lens through which to consider communicative action within groups and was encouraged to review literature drawn from cultural perspectives for accounts which foreground notions of individual perspectives and identity.

Further reading encouraged me to consider how cultural perspectives might also accommodate multiple perspectives by drawing on ideas of multi-voicedness (Bakhtin, 1981, 1986). Bakhtin suggests that '*...the utterance is filled with dialogic overtones*' (1986, p. 102), and argues that:

'...any concrete discourse (utterance) finds the object at which it was directed already as it were overlain with qualification, open to dispute, charged with value, already enveloped in an obscuring mist – or, on the contrary, by the 'light' of alien words that have already been spoken about it. It is entangled, shot through with shared thoughts, points of view, alien value judgements and accents.' (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 276)

This notion would recognise the complexity of multiple and complex perspectives encountered when working and learning in teams, and of the potential of discursive

and argumentative communication for learning across professional boundaries. In an account drawn from the analysis of work practices, Engeström et al (1995, p.320) suggest that negotiating multiple contexts demand and afford different cognitive tools, rules and patterns of social interaction. Engeström argues that the construction of new concepts and new tools may present challenges and conflict to existing practices but suggests (2008, p.116) that this may be constructive.

'...boundary crossing does not have to achieve mutually accepted interpretations... to be fruitful. Realisation of differences and contrasts by means of argumentation may trigger significant collective concept formation on one or both sides of the boundary.'

Engeström's account (2008, p.140) also highlights how questions initiated by individuals may be resolved through 'collective refocusing' of contradictions by collaborative communicative actions which lead in turn to new understandings for object oriented activity not only for groups but also for individuals.

2.4 ACKNOWLEDGING THE VALUE OF USING UNIFIED THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This discussion charts the reflective journey which was undertaken in reviewing literature for theoretical groundings for the study. In the course of reading and reflection I concluded that a framework drawn from multiple theoretical paradigms would be problematic because of difficulties integrating separate and potentially disparate positions into a unified whole. Ultimately, the decision to adopt an approach based on a unified theory hinged on the recognition that it would provide:

'...a coherent and internally consistent methodology rather than a collection of compartmentalised accounts of activity, discourse, and social positioning that have disparate and often contradictory assumptions'. (Daniels, 2010, p.120)

Feelings of having wasted time were mitigated by further reflections which highlighted how the pursuit of a multiple theoretical framework had provided a vehicle for the clarification of the theoretical requirements of the case study, and extended understandings of the breadth of cultural perspectives. My search for a unified theory within the cultural paradigm which could take account of questions of identity and multiple perspectives led me to consider whether the concept of 'expansive learning' (Engeström, 1987) could be compatible with the needs of the study.

The concept of expansive learning would offer a unified theoretical approach which could simultaneously support considerations of 'activity' - the team's work and also 'subject positions' and 'identity' - individual and collective views about the work. Cultural perspectives would also be compatible with understandings of the role of

'discourse' in the study, which would form the medium in which the teamwork took place and in which evidence was gathered. It would also provide the primary tool for analysis. Taken together such considerations led me to acknowledge the many advantages of such a unified cultural approach.

2.5 EXPANSIVE LEARNING: A UNIFIED THEORY FOR THE PRESENT STUDY

Engeström's (1987) argues that in Expansive Learning, learners work together in response to the unique needs of the contexts they encounter to fulfil the demands of object oriented activity, where the processes of learning include not only the development of understanding but also the creation of what is to be learned.

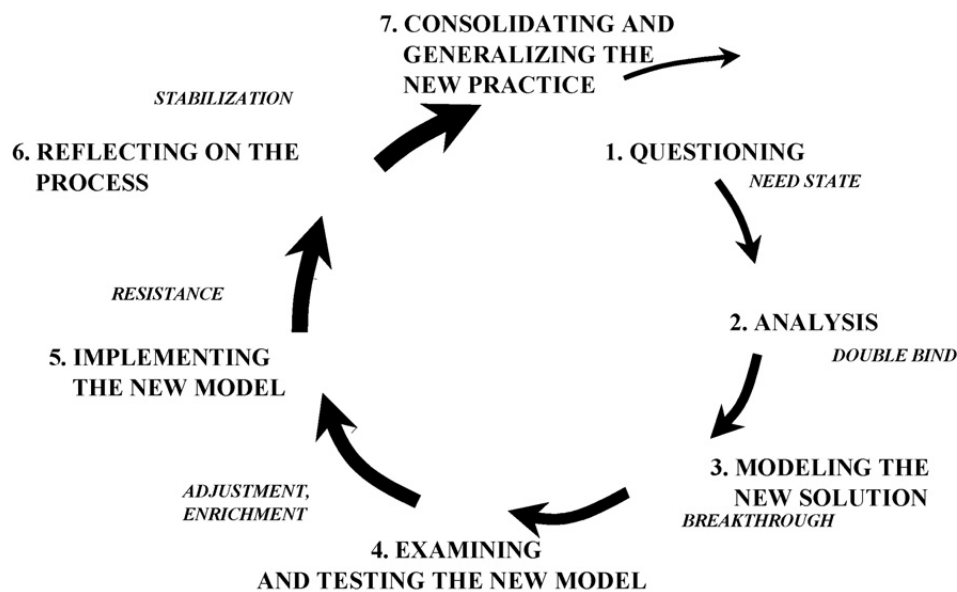
This idea is developed in a recent review in which Engeström and Sannino (2010) explore the cultural theoretical roots of the concept. These include Vygotskian notions of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) (1978). The account includes perspectives drawn from Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) of object orientated activity, highlights the value of contradictions and foregrounds the central place of mediation which may be explicit or implicit in object orientated activity, and emphasises mediation occurring in the form of discourse. Engeström and Sannino (2010, p.5) also stress the importance individual perspectives - voices - in the theory of expansive learning which they describe as an '*inherently multi-voiced process of debate*' which facilitates explorations of individual perspectives at work within collective activities, and the impact of collective activity for individual professional identity and development.

2.5.1 The concept of 'expansive learning' (Engeström and Sannino, 2010)

Engeström offers the concept of Expansive Learning to describe how processes of learning emerging within individuals experiencing contradictions, and which are externalised in social interactions with others as questions about how they may be addressed. Engeström and Sannino suggest that contradictions are the '*driving force*' (2010, p.7) for development when they engender motives in patterns of activity orientated towards the resolution of contradictions in cycles of activity. They argue that the '*process of expansive learning should be understood as construction and resolution of successively evolving contradictions*' (2010, p.7) and may be thought of as the 7-step process illustrated below (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1: Sequence of learning actions in an expansive learning cycle

(Engeström and Sannino 2010, p.8)



The sections that follow offer a more detailed review of the concept as a flexible and robust theoretical framework for the present study in which considerations of cultural and discursive collective and individual approaches interact, complement and challenge one another. Engeström and Sannino (2010, p.2) characterise expansive learning ‘...as learning in which learners construct and implement a radically new, wider, more complex object and concept for their activity’, stressing that such learning cannot be transmitted down vertical lines from expert to novice as in classical models of education because ‘it does not follow laid down paths or include hierarchies of improvement’ (op. cit.).

They also suggest that expansive learning can be viewed as having three key dimensions. First: it is a process that transforms and creates culture; second: it emerges in horizontal movements and exchange between individuals and cultural contexts; and third: it is a process that leads to the formation of theoretical knowledge and concepts. Because of this they suggest that examinations of the processes of expansive learning call for a multi-dimensional treatments. They conclude that by relying on its own metaphor of ‘expansion’, expansive learning provides a perspective on what they argue is the present reality which is that, ‘...nobody knows exactly what needs to be learned’, that a ‘...continuous process optimisation’ where ‘...generalisation is based on identifying and mastering variation’ is viewed as the ‘...root of learning’ (2010, p.3), and where the development of the new activity and

the acquisition of the knowledge and skills it requires are intrinsic to learning processes.

On reflection it appeared that characteristics of Expansive Learning would be particularly applicable to the case study because a key factor of the team's development would be that learning would occur and continue to occur both within the community of the team and within the context of developmental project work. Learning would also emerge in the contexts of team activity, the creative joint working oriented towards change for practice and for the learners they teach, and where the team's work and the contributions made by individual team members would be constantly developing and transforming. Moreover, the study's research questions would seek to clarify whether these transformations would have implications for practice, for settings, and for the community of practitioners working through the medium of Welsh in the local authority.

In the sections that follow I will describe how four key elements of expansive learning provide a theoretical framework for the description, analysis and evaluation of the present study. They include notions of development and learning including the Vygotsky's notion of the zone of proximal development, of object oriented activity including Developmental Work Research, of the role of mediation whether explicit or implicit and, in particular, discursive mediation, and of multi-voicedness.

2.6 EXPANSIVE LEARNING AND CULTURAL THEORIES OF DEVELOPMENT

2.6.1 Social and cultural mediation and learning

The present case study is based on foundations of cultural, social and historical theory developed from Vygotsky's (1978, 1987) work on learning and development. Vygotsky argues that learning is refracted not only through cognitive processes but also through emotional responses, that it has cognitive and affective elements, is active and mediated, and is social and personal. Vygotsky (1997, p.91) suggests that that the goal of education is to develop, *'...not a definite quantity of skills, but particular creative capacities for rapid and skilful social orientation.'*

2.6.2 Learning and development – the affect and emotional responses

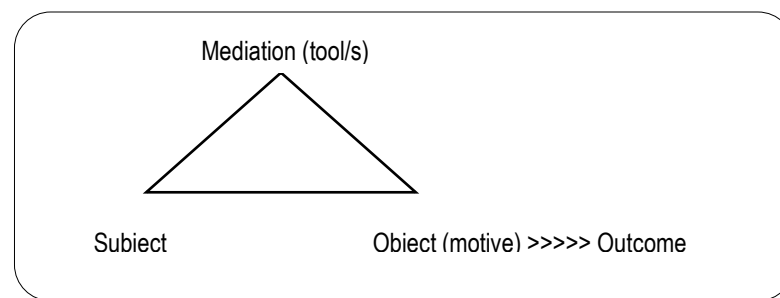
González-Rey (2002, 2009) highlights Vygotsky's view that emotional responses are inherent in activity of any kind including those oriented towards learning and development. He provides an account (2009, p.69) of how Vygotsky argues against perspectives in which there is a mechanical relationship between external and

internal activity. Vygotsky reinforces the idea of learning as 'production' - the creation of something new, as opposed to the internalisation of something already in existence. The implications of this for learning and development in the present study are to be explored in detail later in the chapter.

2.6.3 Learning and development – mediation

Vygotsky (1978, 1987) argues that learning is social and mediated and emerges as a result of the active appropriation of cultural tools, for instance cultural artefacts such as speaking, writing, and gesture, or material tools like machines. This is generally illustrated using the figure below.

Figure 2.2: Mediational triangle (Cole 1996, p.119)



Vygotsky emphasises that learners actively appropriate the facilities afforded by cultural tools, even where user understandings about the tool and its purpose may only be partial. This notion comes to fruition in his concept of the Zone of Proximal Development.

2.6.4 Learning and development – social, cultural and historical

Of particular importance to the present study is Vygotsky's perspective that learning is social, occurring between people before being internalised by individuals. In asserting that mediation is '*a central fact of our psychology*' (cited by Wertsch, 2007, p.178) Vygotsky highlights that the tools or signs that mediate development are always social in origin because their roots lie in and originate from human activity. Post Vygotskian accounts of mediation are offered by Cole (1996, p.103) who describes the use of cultural tools as having '*the dual purpose of shaping and being shaped*'. Wertsch (2007) argues that the use of such tools:

'...begins with the assumption that signs first emerge in social and individual action without their users' full understanding of their meaning or functional role. What then follows is a process of coming to understand the meaning and functional significance of the sign forms that one has been using all along.' (2007, p.186)

Daniel's (2001) account of mediation highlights its role as a key concept which facilitates accounts '*...in which mediators serve as the means by which the individual acts upon and is acted upon by social cultural and historical factors*' (2001, p.14). Vygotsky's theory of learning as action mediated by cultural tools is central to the present study because it underlines the importance of understanding cultural tools and how they facilitate actions to promote learning. Notions of mediation and their essential role in the present study are explored in detail below.

Vygotsky's accounts (1978, 1987) emphasise that learning is mediated by semiotics – signs and symbols. He argues that thinking and speaking are inextricably linked, '*...thought is not only expressed in word but completed in the word...*' (1987, p. 250). Vygotsky argues that because of this thinking and speaking must be considered as a unit of analysis in work to clarify understandings of the '*functional role of verbal meaning in the act of thinking*' (1987, p.249). Vygotsky chooses the concept of 'word meaning' as the basic unit of analysis and his work foregrounds the role of semiotic mediation in cultural perspectives of development.

In contrast, others within the cultural paradigm have argued that Vygotsky's emphasis on mediation through signs is too limited because it excludes non-semiotic aspects of human action. For instance, Leont'ev (1979 p.51) argues that the '*fundamental and genetically primary form of human activity is external and practical*' and describes activity as '*the unit of life that is mediated by mental reflection*' whose function is, '*to orient the subject in the world of objects*' (op. cit., p. 46). In his commentary on this paper, Wertsch (1979b, p.39) highlights how in Leont'ev's view the analysis of human processes should be '*...viewed from the levels of activity, the level of actions with their associated goals, or the level of operations*' and argues:

'...(i)nternal activity, which has arisen out of external, practical activity, is not separate from it and does not rise above it; rather it retains its fundamental and two-way connection with it.' (Leont'ev, 1979 p.58)

2.6.5 Concepts of mediation: semiotic and activity perspectives

Leont'ev's assertion led to divisions within those working within the cultural paradigm. The emerging schools of thought are described by Daniels (2001):

'Activity theory posits psychological development and thus psychological analysis as grounded in practical cultural activities. The symbolic approach understands psychology in terms of collective symbols and concepts.' (2001, p.76)

Although divisions persist, Cole (1996, p.333) suggests that they may be resolved through recognitions that a level of activity is present in semiotic formulations even where it appears to be relegated to the background. He concludes:

‘...mediated action and its activity context are two moments of a single process, and whatever we want to specify as psychological processes is but a moment of their combined properties. It is possible to argue about how best to parse their contributions in individual cases in practice, but attempting such a parsing ‘in general’ results in empty abstractions, unconstrained by the circumstances.’ (1996, p.334)

Examples of this can be seen in the literature. For instance Engeström, (1990, p.7) whose approach foregrounds Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) acknowledges of the central role of mediation by signs in activity and Nummijoki and Engeström (2010) illustrate the role of communication in object-related activities. In addition, Wertsch et al. (1995, p.17) who tend to espouse sociocultural, semiotic approaches accept that artefact mediated development must be situated within activity or in an activity system. This suggests that the dichotomy between approaches which centre on activity and those centred on semiotics is less likely to stem from actual differences, and more likely to reflect perceived differences. Cole (1996) suggests that neither artefacts nor actions exist in isolation from one another but are in fact *‘interwoven with each other and with the social worlds of the human beings they mediate to form vast networks of interconnections’* (1996, p.120). As Daniels argues, *‘those working within the field increasingly draw on both traditions – using one to compensate for the shortcomings of the other, the distinction is becoming increasingly blurred.’* (2001, p.85)

The above analysis highlights how mediation may be viewed as being simultaneously rooted in activity and in semiotics. This has value for the context of the present study where communicative action - discourse - lies at the heart of the team’s activity in developmental project work, and where the learning occurring within the team and for individual team members occurs with creative processes emerging from the communicative activity of its work.

2.6.6 The zone of proximal development and distributed cognition

Vygotsky’s (1978) concept of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) offers a cultural tool for considering how participation in social actions offers contexts for experience which leads to learning and development. With the ZPD Vygotsky conceptualises potential development - the emerging processes which may be practiced with support or in collaboration with others but not yet independently. He argues that for effective learning teaching should be directed within the ZPD of learners.

I have described Vygotsky's emphasis on learning as being mediated by cultural tools where tools may be available for use even before they are fully understood by the learner, and that, moreover, it is through their use of the tools that these understandings develop. These notions of mediation are of particular importance for the study because they highlight the value of active participation in learning, and provide a platform for considering how working together can contribute opportunities for the team to learn together and as individuals.

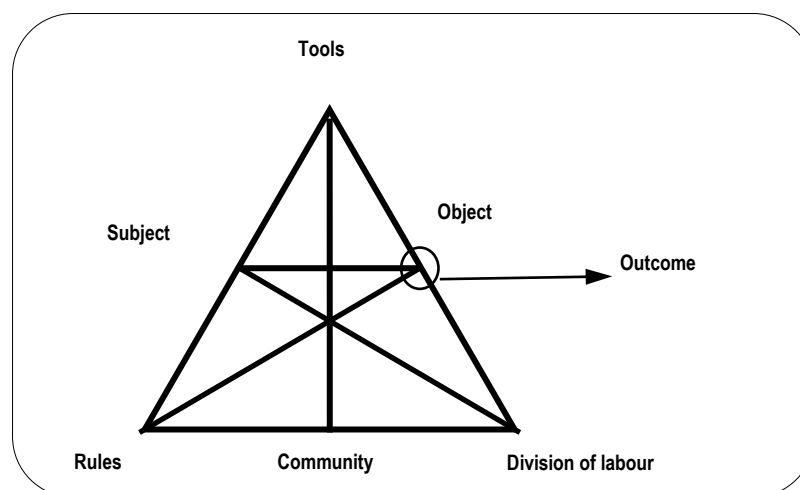
Engeström et al (1997, p.14) applies the idea of ZPD in the world of work defining it as: '*...the distance between everyday actions of individuals and the historically new form of the societal activity that can be collectively generated*'. This definition would be particularly apposite in the present study which would explore how multiple opportunities for professional change may emerge from shared activity of the team and shared and individual perspectives, motivations and goals.

2.7 EXPANSIVE LEARNING AND OBJECT ORIENTED ACTION

2.7.1 Expansive Learning and Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT)

Daniels (2001, p.86) describes how Vygotsky's premise that development is mediated by cultural tools provides the foundation for developing notions of Activity Theory which have elaborated basic notions of mediated object oriented activity illustrated in Figure 2.1 to take account of the ways in which human action takes place within multiple contexts.

Figure 2.3 Cultural Historical Activity Theory (Engeström, 1999)



Expanding the original triangle enables examinations of systems of activity at the level of the community in ways which contrast with Vygotsky's application to individual learners. They provide a means for considering activity within wider cultural and historical contexts which has come to be known as Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) illustrated in Figure 2.2 above.

Engeström (1999) argues that CHAT offers a theoretical framework both to structure developmental activity and also to study it. Firstly, it has potential for structuring processes of team working, and secondly it provides a framework with which to organise research and reflection about those processes. He explores how the objects of joint activity, that is the aims and goals to which activity is orientated, emerge and develop; and also how the activity is situated within social, cultural and historical contexts.

In CHAT developmental outcomes are understood to come about when those seeking change - the 'subject' - take action to bring about change - the 'object' - in ways that are mediated by cultural or material tools within broader social, cultural and historical contexts, where context is defined not only as that which surrounds, but also as that which weaves together (Cole, 1996). Such contexts are also considered with a view to understanding how they may support or constrain the work where development is not only an object of study but also a general research methodology. CHAT would be applied in the present study which would take an interventionist approach to supporting change through developmental project work.

2.7.2 Cultural Historical Activity Theory and 'SUBJECT':

individual perspectives and identity

González-Rey's (2002, 2009) accounts foreground the Vygotskian perspective that emotional responses are inherent in all activity using the word '*perezhivanie*' to describe the ways in which cognitive and affective elements are integrated in psychological development (2009, p.69) – the '*unity of psychological development in the study of the social situation of development*' (2002, p.136). In *Educational Psychology* Vygotsky (1997b, p.83) considers the role of personal interests as being key drivers of learning when they are harnessed and transformed into higher forms of activity (1997b, p.82). He (1997, p.90) describes play and games as '*the greatest school of social experience*', noting that: '*the child's effort is always limited and regulated by the aggregate moves made by all the other players. Every game problem includes ...the ability to co-ordinate one's behaviour with the behaviour of others, to enter into active relations with others.*' Vygotsky (1997b, p.93) highlights

that in play '*...all the child's instinctive capacities being strained to the utmost and his interest being stretched to the highest degree ...it becomes possible to induce the child to discipline his behaviour in such a way that it obeys certain rules that point in the direction of a single goal*'. Vygotsky highlights commonalities between the features of play and the features of work which, he argues differ only in that in play the reward is experienced as affective satisfaction whereas with paid work the reward takes the form of material remuneration.

The present study would aim to examine the implications of affect for motivating and driving forward self directed project work on self identified projects. For instance whether, within developmental work research contexts, professional dissatisfaction and a desire for change might motivate the team to embrace new challenges, take risks, and undertake additional responsibilities in goal directed activity to solve problems relating to their practice. It would examine the role of affect in team efforts to meet the needs of those learners for whom they work. The study would also aim to explore the role of developmental project work, not only as a vehicle to engender changes for practice, but also for practitioner learning – professional development. For this reason considerations of the 'subject' position in the CHAT triangle would include considerations both for the team, and also for individual team members.

2.7.3 Cultural Historical Activity Theory and OBJECT: Developmental Work Research (DWR)

In his accounts of development and learning Vygotsky (1987) distinguishes between 'spontaneous concepts', gained incidentally in the world, and 'scientific concepts' developed consciously through instruction. He suggests that each has limitations, but that they interact together in 'true concept formation', arguing that:

'...the weakness of the everyday concept lies in its incapacity for abstraction, in the child's incapacity to operate on it in a voluntary manner, ...the weakness of the scientific concept lies in its verbalism, in its insufficient saturation with the concrete.'
(1987, p.169)

Lave and Wenger (1991) suggest that mature concepts develop when 'spontaneous' and 'scientific' concepts merge, e.g. through formal instruction in schools as '*instructional conversations*' (Daniels 2001, p.59) where teachers act to support learners as they '*weave together*' everyday and school understandings.

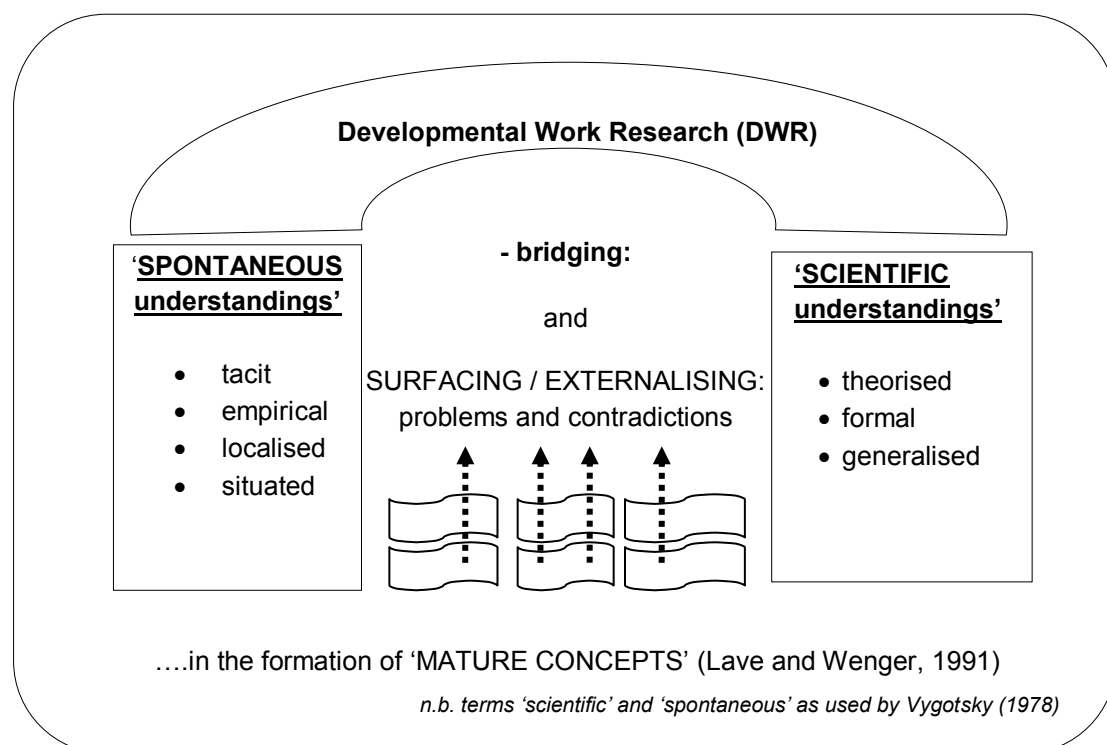
Vygotsky's characterisations of 'spontaneous' and 'scientific' concepts are distinguished by the way in which they are mediated and the forms of mediation that support their development. Ideas of how mediation may be explicit and implicit (Wertsch, 2007) support understandings of development and learning. Wertsch

(2007, p.180) observes that Vygotsky considers the importance of explicit mediation in accounts of his experimental work where mediation is explicitly and intentionally introduced into activities with the intention of supporting change and bringing about development.

Vygotsky's method of 'dual stimulation' (1978, p.75) provides an example of how explicit mediation may be used to 'objectify inner psychological processes' in a structured way through the inclusion of an additional tool – the 'mediating means' (Engeström, 2007) in order to study learning as it takes place. In contrast, with implicit mediation signs are viewed as '*part of a pre-existing, independent stream of communicative action that becomes integrated with other forms of goal-directed behaviour*' (Wertsch, 2007, p.181). The implications of both explicit and implicit mediation would provide useful lenses through which to examine processes in the present study.

Engeström (1999, 2007) suggests that 'developmental work research' (DWR) is a strategy for facilitating such interweaving in the world of work, a methodology for applying CHAT by surfacing and externalising problems and contradictions in existing practice, negotiating agreement, and planning future steps.

Figure 2.5 Developmental work research: the formation of mature concepts



In the present study an adapted DWR methodology would be used to bridge the spontaneous, 'on the job knowing' of practitioners and more theoretical, 'scientific', understandings of joint working for change, with a view to supporting the development of mature understandings which are informed by both. This is illustrated in Figure 2.3 above.

A significant strength of expansive learning and CHAT lies in the way they would support the analysis of complex activities which take account of social, cultural and historical contexts within which object oriented activity takes place. In the context of the present study CHAT would have the potential to support considerations of affective issues in the furtherance of activity towards emerging objects and outcomes. Addressing issues of individual and team motivation and identity would offer opportunities to establish the outcomes of team work, in which individual team members undertake work to support and promote social interactions of the team as a whole.

Conceptualisations of CHAT would focus on the objects of the team's joint action and provide a framework for considerations of the motivations that act as drivers for joint action. It would also provide a framework for examining the ways in which the team's activity takes place within the wider cultural and historical contexts including local, regional and national communities, the rules which govern those communities, and the ways in which work roles are shared within the team. Expansive learning would be mediated by discourse in which questions and contradictions could be externalised and considered collectively in activity to find solutions to shared problems.

2.8 EXPANSIVE LEARNING AND MEDIATION

I have described how the writings of Vygotsky (1978, 1987) foreground the role of mediation in learning in which the benefits offered by material and cultural tools are appropriated by their users in activities which bring about learning.

2.8.1 Implicit and explicit mediation

Vygotsky's (1978) idea of 'dual stimulation' and Engeström's (1999, 2007) Developmental Work Research (DWR) consider team problem solving activity through the provision of conceptual tools. However, Wertsch's (2007) account of mediation in Vygotsky's writing provides a timely reminder that in any activity multiple mediational means may simultaneously include aspects of activity and semiotic communication, and that in any activity implicit mediational means occur alongside

explicit forms of mediation. Daniels' account of implicit or invisible mediation (2010, p.106) centres on questions of how the institutional structures are cultural products and, as such, serve as mediators. He identifies echoes between Wertsch's account of implicit and explicit mediation and Bernstein's (2003) notions of invisible and visible pedagogies. Bernstein (2003, p.64) argues that, *'...whereas invisible pedagogies are always likely to relay integrated or embedded skills/subjects, visible pedagogies ...are more likely to relay differentiated skills/subjects'*.

Daniels suggests that there is also a need to consider the, *'invisible or implicit mediational properties of institutional structures that themselves are transformed through the actions of those whose interactions are influenced by them'*, and for the development of tools for reflection *'to enable participants to 'read' their practice within the 'grammar' of its settings'* (2010, p.107). Daniels (2010, p.115) argues for the development tools for analysing and transforming networks of culturally heterogeneous activities through dialogue and debate, where:

'...networks of activity within which contradictions and struggles take place in the definition of the motives and object of the activity call for an analysis of power and control within and between developing activity systems.' (2010, p.115)

Bernstein's attention to invisible semiotic mediation is considered by Hasan (1990, 2002) who describes his approach to discourse as not only regulating cognitive functions, but also shaping of *'...dispositions, identities and practices'* (1990, p.3). She argues that invisible semiotic mediation is inherent in relations of power and control. This is to be considered in more detail in the discussions below.

2.8.2 Discursive mediation

I have described how discourse occurring between individuals working together would be viewed as a tool with which to consider both team processes and also the outcomes of team processes in the present study. Potter and Wetherell (1997) argue that what is achieved with talk and text can be analysed in terms of the outcomes they accomplish. Middleton (2010, p.92) identifies an analytical challenge in how the changes emerging in the professional meetings can be tracked in teamwork which aims, *'to introduce and use discursive analysis for tracking how relevant distinctions concerning multi-agency working were established and made to stick in the emergent learning of what it takes to practice such forms of working'*. Middleton goes on to stress that:

'...the general analytical challenge was how to introduce and engage the whole of the research team in the conduct of analysis focused on the organisation of communicative action.' (2010, p.92)

Clearly, the emerging tool – ‘D’ analysis and its use for the analysis of processes of discursive mediation represents a concrete example of expansive learning, emerging as it has in the context of developmental work research (Daniels, 2010).

2.8.3 Discourse as communicative action

Vygotsky (1978, 1987) argues that development is mediated by social, that is, cultural and historical artefacts or tools. For the present study the primary tool for object oriented action is communicative action – discourse. My account highlights how discourse plays a central role in the present study. Firstly it is that which is to be studied - the medium for team working. It is also the method by which it may be studied – discursive evidence from meetings and interviews. Based on his research into inter-agency working Daniels (2010, p.108) suggests that there is a need to understand discourse as a cultural historical product drawing on Bernstein’s (1993) argument for the development of languages of description to facilitate ‘multilevel’ understandings of discourse within organisations.

Wertsch (1998, p.106) suggests how cultural perspectives may take account of discursive perspectives where ‘narrative’ may be viewed as a concept with potential as a cultural tool with cognitive functions. He suggests that attending to the narratives of individuals and groups of individuals as they explore and share their experience and work together provide accounts of human action. These, he argues, which gather together diverse elements such as agency, goals, tools, and contradictions amongst others, so that they can be considered together as constituents of a single whole. Wertsch stresses that *‘...the cognitive function of narrative form ...is not just to relate a succession of events but to body forth an ensemble of interrelationships of many different kinds as a single whole’* (1998, p.106).

2.8.4 Discourse: a cultural tool for distributed learning

Cole and Engeström (1993, p.15) suggest that cultural considerations of distributed cognition provide structures for considerations of how learning is shared between people interacting within the contexts of their social roles. This has a particular resonance to this study which seeks to explore the changes for practice and for practitioners that may emerge from developmental project work. Accordingly, the study will focus on the team’s discursive actions during joint working to explore ideas, share knowledge and understanding, build agreement and learn together.

2.9 EXPANSIVE LEARNING -

INDIVIDUAL, COLLECTIVE AND COMMUNITY VOICES

2.9.1 Multiple voices

Drawing on Bakhtin (1981), Engeström and Sannino (2010) argue that Expansive Learning is an inherently multi-voiced process of debate, negotiation and orchestration which includes '*...all the conflicting and complementary voices of the various groups and strata in the activity system under scrutiny*', where such juxtapositions may include, '*clashing fireworks of different speech types and languages*' (2010, p.5).

Earlier in this chapter I described how the team operates within a marginal position within both historical and cultural contexts and how the study would aim to consider whether opportunities for joint working on self identified projects would offer opportunities to develop alternative perspectives and support a new sense of efficacy associated with active endeavours to develop solutions to the problems they face. I also described how notions of identity (Holland and Lachiotte, 2007, p.104) may be viewed as constructions and where the self is seen as: '*...a complex emergent phenomenon continually produced in and by individuals in their interchanges with others and with the culturally transformed material world...*' would offer insights into team's position within cultural and historical contexts.

2.9.2 Discourse and language: identity and power

As I have described, the Welsh language is a minority language, not only in the United Kingdom, but also in Wales which has implications for issues of identity and power. For instance, the recruitment of professionals able to offer services through the medium of Welsh is problematic in many parts of Wales. Nevertheless, the Welsh language is the language in which many conduct both their professional and their personal lives. Providing effective services in Welsh is therefore, a matter of equality as well as one of statutory responsibility. Welsh medium practitioners may be marginalised when opportunities for accessing support or advice in Welsh are limited, even in circumstances where the importance of bilingualism is widely accepted. One team member commented:

'...it is an effort, it is not a natural thing to do ...if you are teaching children through the medium of Welsh and you have done Welsh assessments, translating into English to discuss it later is very hard.' (SENCo1)

As a fluent Welsh speaker, but with English as my first language, I experience this in reverse. I am able to communicate fluently in Welsh, but for me this involves more

effort than using English. Such pressures may be underestimated because the practitioners are not only fluent in English but are also able to switch between languages in ways which appear to be effortless. The appearance of automaticity disguises the work that is entailed in achieving such switching between the two languages.

Team members describe feeling disempowered by asymmetries in the discourse of service provision. Wertsch (1998) gives an account of power and authority and the silence and distance that this can induce. This provides useful insights into the way the English language may be privileged within the local authority and in Wales as a whole. Wertsch bases his account on Bakhtin's (1981) ideas of 'authoritative discourse' which '*...demands that we acknowledge it, that we make it our own*', and '*...binds us, quite independent of any power it may have to persuade us internally; ...its authority already fused in it*' (1981, p.342). In contrast, Bakhtin (op. cit.) presents the notion of '*internally persuasive discourse*' which invites the listener to use it as a '*thinking device, as a starting point for a response that may incorporate and change the form and meaning of what was originally said*' (1981, p.345). The present study would aim to provide opportunities for team members to use language in new ways which suit the purposes of the team.

The asymmetries of discourse used within institutions are also explored by Hasan (2000) who suggests that, '*... moving with the movement of talk and making the talk more to suit one's own purposes is one way of holding one's own in various categories of discursive power games... (where) ...part of one's cultural knowledge is knowledge about the extent to which others are likely to share one's knowledge and cognitive perspective*' (2000, p.29).

The present study would aim to address possibilities for the redistribution of power where practitioners make opportunities to use talk to suit their own purposes, not only by communicating with one another in Welsh, but also by addressing topics of their own choosing, as opposed to those articulated in the authoritative voices of authority both within the local authority and beyond.

2.9.3 Narratives of experience: individuals and the group

Holland and Lave (2000) emphasise the interrelationships between individuals and their environment, using the term '*history in person*' to describe how individual identities are formed in practice through the '*collective work of invoking, improvising, appropriating and refusing*' (2000, p.29), in shaping and reshaping contexts.

Leadbetter (2006) considers how multi-agency teams can contribute to such reconstructions and how this may result in new and multiple professional identities. She argues that notions of contradiction and struggle inherent in these ideas highlight the active nature of joint working and raises questions about how individuals cope in these situations. The present study would aim to clarify understandings of the implications of this for the team and its work.

2.9.4 Relational Agency: '*knowing how to know who*'

Edwards (2006) argues that professional learning should involve more than a mastery of established practices, but should also:

'...include a capacity for interpreting and for approaching problems, for contesting interpretations, for reading the environment, for drawing on the resources there, for being a resource for others, for focusing on the core objects of the professions' (2006, p.179).

She offers the notion of '*relational agency, the capacity align one's thoughts and actions with those of others to interpret problems of practice and to respond to those interpretations*' (2005, pp.169-70), where alignments in joint action require eliciting recognising and negotiating how it may be achieved – '*knowing how to know who*'. Edwards argues that 'relational agency' may offer a means to further understandings about joint action. Network building processes, between one another, within settings, across agencies locally, and within regional and national contexts, would be considered in the present study.

2.9.5 Experience

Vasilyuk (1991) offers the notion of 'experience' as a lens through which to consider this. He defines 'experience' as '*an active, result-producing internal process which actually transforms the psychological situation*' (1991, p.20), a creative process of adjusting to change by actively seeking alternative possibilities from among those available and the reconstruction of perspectives adjusted to the changed context. This conceptualisation of experience would provide a framework for exploring how team members adjust to changes emerging from our work.

The present study would aim to investigate how the team's work engenders change to strengthen its marginal position. It would also aim to consider how multifaceted practitioner identities may develop or be reconstructed and how team members may, through participation in joint action, come to reconstruct their professional identities as active agents in developing practice, as opposed to passive recipients of a status

quo. The study would adopt a narrative approach to exploring the discursive construction of professional identities of team members.

2.9.6 The study: theoretical groundings

In this chapter I have described how elements from cultural theory would underpin the present study and provide a unified framework for structuring, conducting, analysing and discussing the present study. In Chapter 3 my account will turn to the methodological considerations which frame the research.

3: METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this chapter I present an account of the search for appropriate methods and their relationship to the theory underpinning the overall aims of the study. The account will include the rationale for the selection of the preferred methods to address research questions and support evidence gathering.

The objective of the case study would be to investigate how professional learning and practice may be supported for a team of practitioners who work through the medium of Welsh in a local education authority in North East Wales. The work would develop earlier work which had aimed to promote joint working and to build capacity using input initiated, directed, co-ordinated and delivered by local authority officers. Evaluations of this work which had revealed that the earlier project's aims had not been fulfilled would pave the way for an alternative approach.

'The practice of building the capacity of professionals by the (team's) approach has been a strand in previous local authority projects.' (Local Authority Principal Educational Psychologist)

The present research would study a new phase of work for the team who had expressed a desire to work together on developmental projects emerging from challenges faced in their practice. Team members experienced high levels of frustration about persistent difficulties which seemed resistance to change, impatience about limitations in their support systems, and anger that their marginal position had implications not only for themselves as practitioners but also for the children they teach. The study would be undertaken at a time when members were no longer satisfied with simply discussing the nature of their difficulties but were impatient to take action.

'So obviously there was a huge need and the sense of urgency to work together to produce practical things that would help the staff involved and, in so doing, help all the children that we all are trying to help. We had been through this whinging stage and we were so ready to do something about it and it was almost as if you appeared, like a fairy godmother, at the right time'. (SNT1)

The team's expressed wish was to engage in project work identified and agreed in response to a problem of practice. The study would be undertaken within the context of active developmental project work. In the sections that follow I offer an account of the rationale which underpinned the search for the most appropriate methodology with which to address the study's research questions.

3.1 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

An essential first step in the present study would be to obtain team members' consent to conduct the research. Their permission to gather data would be renewed at each meeting in which audio recordings were made. Emerging data would be included into the research only with team members' consent. As data would generally be gathered in Welsh and translated into English during transcription, team members and others would be consulted about whether the translation reflected their intended meanings.

3.2 DEVELOPING A METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The present study would take an interventionist approach to support change and development which would represent a radical shift from earlier work. Specific aims would be to support, promote and research new ways of working together and engender outcomes for practice. By undertaking active developmental project work the team would be moving into new territory in which their existing expertise and skills would be applied in new ways with a view to bringing about the development of new skills and new ways of learning for that context.

3.3 METAPHORS OF LEARNING

Sfard's (1998) notion of metaphors of learning would provide a context for thinking about how the team's existing knowledge and expertise would support new learning.

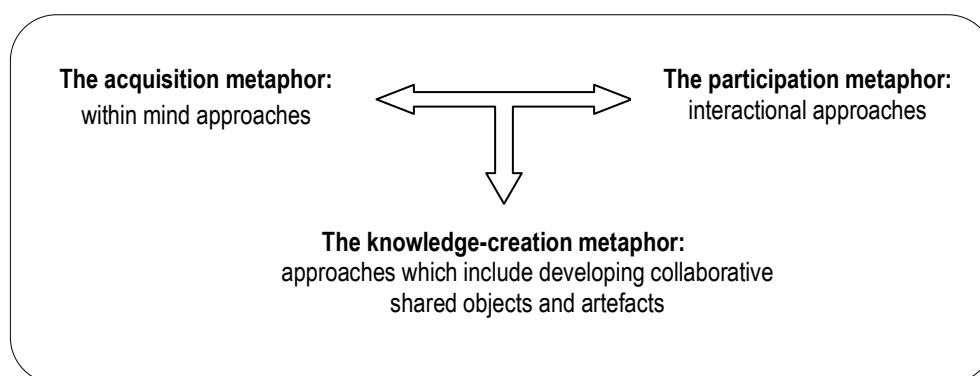
'The idea that new knowledge germinates in old knowledge has been promoted by all of the theoreticians of intellectual development, from Piaget to Vygotsky to contemporary cognitive scientists. The notion of metaphor as a conceptual transplant clearly complements this view by providing a means for explaining the processes that turn old into new.' (Sfard, 1998, p.4)

Sfard describes two metaphors of learning: the 'acquisition metaphor' where learning is transmitted from an expert to a novice and where concepts are developed and knowledge is acquired; and the 'participation metaphor' where learning is interactive and takes place in community with others. Sfard's discussion highlights the strengths and weaknesses of each of the metaphors. Each has its respective potential to support development depending on the context, purpose and nature of the learning, the learners and their teachers. Sfard suggests that they should be considered in tandem where *'...an adequate combination of the acquisition and participation metaphors would bring to the fore the advantages of each of them, while keeping their respective drawbacks at bay.'* (Sfard 1998, p.10)

Paavola and Hakkarainen (2005) develop Sfard's notion of metaphors of learning. They suggest the inclusion of a third metaphor the 'knowledge-creation metaphor'. In this metaphor learning and inquiry is understood to emerge *'in the collaborative development of shared objects and artefacts'* and are viewed as processes *'of creating or articulating knowledge rather than just assimilating existing knowledge or participating in prevailing practices'* (Paavola and Hakkarainen (2005, p.540).

Paavola and Hakkarainen (2005) emphasise the relationship between the 'knowledge-creation metaphor and each of the metaphors identified by Sfard (1998). They argue that the 'knowledge creation metaphor' resembles the 'participation metaphor' in that learning is considered in terms of *'creating social structures and collaborative processes that support knowledge advancement and innovation'*. In contrast it resembles the 'acquisition model' where it *'addresses the importance of generating new ideas and conceptual knowledge'*. They conclude that each of the three metaphors may be viewed as being complimentary.

Fig 3.1 Three metaphors of learning, based on Paavola and Hakkarainen (2005)



These metaphors of learning provide a context with which to examine alternative methodologies and inform the decision making for the present study.

3.3.1 .The 'acquisition metaphor of learning':

transmission models of continuing professional development

As I have described, the present study emerged from an earlier project which had adopted approaches to professional development based on training designed and delivered by local authority officers in response to perceptions about the team's development needs. The intention of this work had been to promote the development of an independent team able to provide mutual support for one another. This approach would be located within the acquisition metaphor of learning (Sfard, 1998).

At the outset of the study there was general agreement this aim had not been realised and that an alternative approach would be needed to bring about the desired changes. As a first step in the new approach it had been agreed that the team would be allowed to reach decisions about their priorities for one area of practice and to undertake a project to resolve that problem. This agreement opened the door to new possibilities for the team and its work, namely to identify, address and seek to resolve problems which they encounter in practice through developmental project work.

Initially the team would undertake new ways of working within the context of a single project, but would come to recognise that a principle had been established which could be applied to other problems. The imperative for change coupled with new feelings of independence would provide the necessary motivation to embrace new ways of working, and to assume new responsibilities however daunting that might be and in spite of clearly expressed doubts and fears of failure.

'Someone has got to say - yes we are going to do it. We are ambitious but we need to be ambitious because no one else is doing the work. Is there a way for you to see if anyone else is working this way? It is work by teachers for teachers and you are bringing us together. If you hadn't done it we wouldn't be doing it - and it is right for someone to say this needs to be done, and people are great because they think we can do it. I don't know if it will work'. (SENCo4)

Team discussions would highlight very significant difficulties as problems needing to be solved, preferably by someone else, associated with feelings of frustration, doubt, uncertainty, and fear. A sense of being the victims of circumstances was shared including anger that the difficulties they face had not been resolved. Such contradictions would be expressed with vehemence in earlier meetings. These deeply held feelings would provide the incentives and inspire the acceptance of new ways of working. Because of this it became clear that an appropriate methodology would need to support explorations and considerations the issues of affect and identity which would be instrumental in effecting change within the study. This would preclude the adoption of positivist methodologies which aim to be 'neutral' and to be based on objective generalised knowledge. Furthermore, my combined roles as researcher and team member would render inappropriate such approaches in which the researcher is understood to engage in impartial and objective observation and deduction (Robson, 2002, p. 20).

3.3.2 The 'participation metaphor of learning':

ethnography and grounded theories

Methods within the participation metaphor of learning were considered as a possible alternative to transmission approaches of acquisition metaphor of learning described

above. Constructivist perspectives assert that understandings of reality and knowledge are actively constructed (Gergen, 1999, p.236) in response to experience in the world, where people are understood to build their understandings of their experience - personal constructs (Kelly, 1963). From this perspective meanings are understood to be continuously negotiable and multiple constructions of reality are not only possible but also potentially beneficial. Moreover, in the constructivist paradigm uncertainties may be considered a source of strength rather than weakness. Constructivist approaches such as those used in ethnography and anthropological research may include notions of 'thick description' and 'blurred genres' posited by Geertz (1979, 1983) described in the previous chapter.

Grounded theories drawn from the constructivist paradigm (Charmaz, 2006, p.3) generate theory from data gathered through observations and interactions with others in the world. Data collection using multiple methods, multiple observers, or informed by multiple perspectives might include observations, audio or video recordings, structured, semi-structured or unstructured interviews, participant diaries or focus group discussions. In grounded theory bodies of data are considered, reconsidered, sorted and categorised to identify themes, for example using a 'bricoleur' approach (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005, p.5). Validation is achieved through the 'triangulation' (Robson, 2002, p.174) of evidence from multiple sources.

Constructivist approaches feature widely within the practice of educational psychology (Ravenette, 1999; Rhydderch and Gameson, 2010; Stoker, 2000), drawing on Kelly's (1963) notion of personal constructs. In this approach facilitating change and resolving difficulties is understood to come about through changes in the way that they are understood. Such notions would have particular resonance to the present study's aim to strengthen a marginal position. This was understood to be less likely to come about as a result of significant material changes to the contexts in which team practice takes place, and more likely to come about as a result changes in the team's perceptions of their situation and reconstructions of professional identity.

3.3.3. 'Knowledge-creation metaphor of learning'.

Earlier work grounded in constructivism had demonstrated its potential to provide effective theoretical frameworks consistent with the participation metaphor of learning. I have described how consideration had shown that the present study would require a different approach because it would aim not only to document change but

also to facilitate change processes. It would require the use of metaphors of learning that reflect this difference and a methodology which support interventionist approaches.

The context would demand active engagement with a team of individual practitioners with ideas and imperatives of their own as well as a desire to work together on developmental projects to address issues relating to their own practice and the needs of the learners they support. As the team's work would enter new territory and what would need to be learned to achieve the team's aims would need to be created in the processes of the learning. A robust approach would be required which would provide a structure for exploring the dynamic social and cultural processes of creative developmental project work geared towards resolutions of contradictions encountered in practice in which learning is understood using Paavola and Hakkarainen's (2005) concept of knowledge-creation metaphor of learning. This would offer a lens through which to consider how Engeström's Theory of Expansive Learning (Engeström and Sannino, 2010) would apply in the context of the present study.

3.3.4 Expansive learning

In the previous chapter I described how Holland et al (1998, p.8) offer a conceptual bridge with which to link cultural and constructivist understandings of identity. They suggest that identities are *'important bases from which people create new activities, new worlds, and new ways of being'* (1998, p.5) which are simultaneously malleable, changeable and generative.

This bridge would have important implications for the present study for two reasons. First, Holland et al recognise that even though constructivist perspectives and cultural perspectives may be considered as being theoretically and analytically separate in practice they may be viewed as lying at opposite ends of a continuous field. Second, and more importantly in the present study, they illustrate the importance of concepts of identity to understandings of how individuals and teams come to generate the motivation and energy necessary to undertake activity to bring about change.

Theoretical groundings using the cultural concept of Expansive Learning (Engeström and Sannino, 2010) described in Chapter 2 emphasise learning as construction or creation. In expansive learning knowledge is understood to be constantly developing. Crucially for the present study, expansive learning foregrounds the social and

distributed nature of learning and where outcomes emerge not necessarily as solutions to problems but as reconfigurations of problems.

The emerging team and its work would draw on the experience of members' in their primary roles, their identities as Welsh-medium practitioners and the difficulties and contradictions encountered in their practice. These would crystallise together as imperatives to work together on projects for change. In the present study, what would need to be learned by the team would depend on the ways in which they would work together. Work would include activity to consider how problems encountered in practice are characterised and redefined in collective activity oriented towards the emerging objects. For these reasons I concluded that expansive learning would offer the framework for the study's methodology and embarked on the next step which would include considerations of how to apply the tenets of the approach to the development of a methodology for the study.

3.3.5 Developmental Work Research

Vygotsky's (1978) premise that human functioning should be studied as it develops would provide the starting point for the study. Vygotsky (1978, p.74) argues that methodologies for the study of development should aim to observe mediated activity in which learners make use of available cultural artefacts to support the solution of problems which they could not solve using their existing skills. Vygotsky coined the term 'dual stimulation' to describe this methodological approach.

Considerations of the potential advantages of Engeström's (2007) approach to 'dual stimulation', the Change Laboratory, is described in detail later in this chapter. Such research, which he terms Developmental Work Research (DWR) (Engeström, 2007) deploys conceptual tools such as the framework provided by Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) (Engeström 1999) in object oriented activity. In DWR communicative action would be situated and undertaken within the contexts of the team's work. It would aim to engender change for the team, for practice, and for individual team members, as well as providing a lens through which the unfolding processes would be observed.

Change laboratory approaches adopt interventionist approaches in work orchestrated through the explicit articulation and implementation of cultural tools and the externalisation and explication of contradictions and difficulties, by modelling alternative ways of working. The application of the methodology would support the

study of interventions undertaken in team meetings and applied in practice in ways which were compatible with developmental project workshop approach.

Engeström and Sannino's account (2010) describes projects which aimed to address questions about practice using the change laboratory with a view to identifying and implementing alternative approaches to facilitate change, for instance, its application in the 'Learning in and for interagency working' project (Daniels et al, 2007a), a study of inter-professional learning, which aimed to examine and support the learning of professionals who are engaged in the creation of new forms of multi-agency practice.

'Learning in co-configuration settings is typically distributed over long, discontinuous periods of time. It is accomplished in and between multiple loosely inter-connected activity systems and organisations and representing different traditions, domains of expertise, and social languages.' (Daniels et al, 2007a, p.7)

Applications of the change laboratory approach have generally focused on the work of professionals working to reach decisions about barriers to effective working and to determine new ways of working. This team would engage in work to resolve some of the constraints they experience by enacting new forms of practice through developmental project work. Engeström (2007) highlights issues relating to the agency of the practitioners involved in change laboratory work where:

'...practitioners interpret their work situation as an iron cage where they must do what they are told. As systemic contradictions accumulate in the work activity, repeated dilemmatic problem situations and 'impossible tasks' emerge, confusion, stress and resistance grow, and unpredictable 'irrational' actions are likely.' (Engeström, 2007, p.382)

The team had articulated their sense of being trapped by circumstances inherent to their role. For instance they expressed anxieties about whether they could or should assert themselves as professionals able to act for themselves. They were wary about stepping outside perceived limits of their role to engage in work likely to be both time consuming and difficult, and also potentially dangerous because it could be perceived by others as being presumptuous. Indeed, the fact that such a stance might expose the team to failure was sometimes articulated as a reason not to risk it.

'What is the point of us making something, if perhaps it is out there, someone has already done it?' (SENCo 9)

Participation in new ways of working together would include engagement in object oriented activity hitherto viewed as lying outside the professional remit of the team was viewed as being very risky. In seeking and embracing change the team would not only be seeking to develop new ways of working, they would be creating 'new activities, new worlds, and new ways of being' (Holland et al, 1998, p.5). Such new

forms of activity were approached with a hesitancy expressed as fears that, in taking assertive action they would be vulnerable to the censure or ridicule of others.

'So I am trying to get a structure ... now don't laugh. So there are these ideas for reading books... and so I thought if I could do that, but it is impossible, I don't know enough about phonics. But what if instead of starting ... so here we go ... here it is ... So could we put something together and say that is what we need ...or is that too ambitious?'
(SENCo1)

Vygotsky uses the word, 'perezhivanie' (González-Rey 2009, p.69) to describe how cognitive and affective elements are integrated indissolubly in development. These reflections highlighted how a methodology to meet the developmental needs of the team would also need to address affective issues, team member vulnerabilities as well as their strengths. Engeström (2007, p.382) acknowledged that change laboratory approaches have the potential to become manipulative unless researchers learn to listen and hear the voices of participants who feel exposed and vulnerable in change processes and whose suggestions may be articulated indirectly because of this. He concludes that the interventions of the researcher should aim to nurture and support the expansion of the contributions of all team members. Such ideas would be reflected in the methods applied to the present study, particularly with regard to need to strike a balance between allowing sufficient challenge to motivate action, and providing sufficient support to encourage action and endure the risk of failure.

Multiple contradictions mean that the Welsh-medium practice occurs in a language which is simultaneously privileged and yet marginalised. Despite their experience, skills and specialist expertise the team occupy a minority position and authoritative discourses articulated by the English speaking majority may fail to recognise the extent and value of this expertise. I have described how, in their practice, team members are generally faced with making the necessary adjustments to facilitate communication with others and how, because of this, they place high value on opportunities for working together and with others using the Welsh language.

'You speak to us in our mother tongue, in the language that we use to teach learners'.
(SENCo1)

Questions of identity and affect would have implications for the methodology adopted in the present study including feeling vulnerable and of not being equal to the tasks which needed to be undertaken. Team member reflections illustrated how these fears were mitigated through membership of the team which offered mutual support and partnership.

'Well we all feel a bit marginalised because of the specialist nature of the work that we do out there in our schools so that when we come together to share things it is just great'. (SNT1)

Although receptive to the idea of the change laboratory approach the team were keen to locate the work within their professional experience. They readily gave individual and collective consent for the case study to be undertaken including the recording of team dialogues.

'You ask if we can record, you say that you are writing something and what does everyone say? Ok, and then we forget about it'. (SENCo1)

However the team were keen to ensure that research processes would not compromise their emerging autonomy. The team were also keen to assert their intention to work on tasks which would have direct applications to practice in schools, and to strike an appropriate balance between discussions for object oriented activity and discussions in object oriented activity particularly activity oriented to the development of resources for use in their schools.

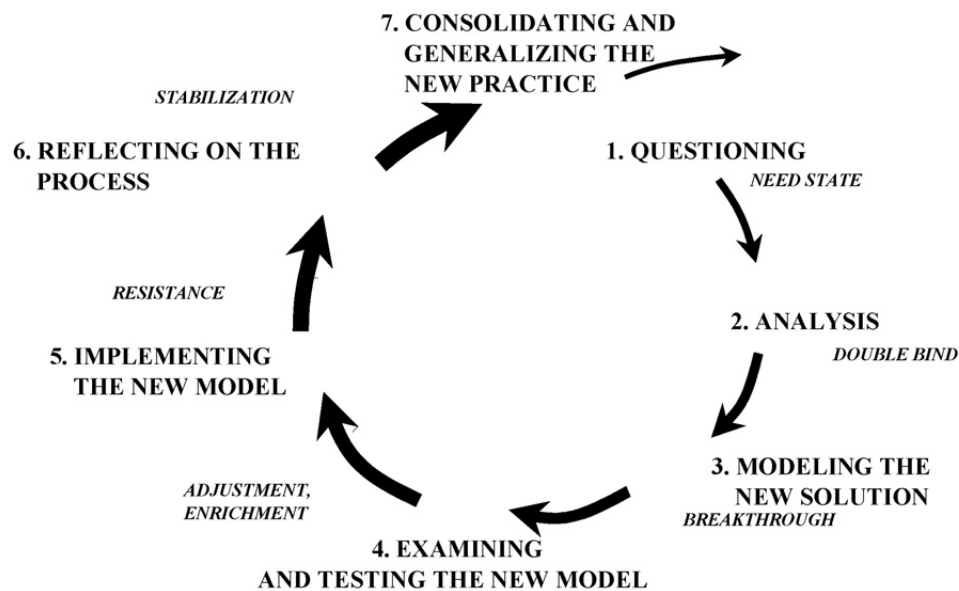
'We are not in our own little bubble and really that it how it should be because it is in the schools that these things are going to be used'. (SENCo3).

Vygotsky's (1978, p.75) notion of 'dual stimulation' offers a way in which explicit mediation may be used to 'objectify inner psychological processes' in a structured way through the addition of additional tool – the 'mediating means' (Engeström, 2007), to allow the study of learning as it occurs. In contrast in implicit mediation signs are viewed as '*part of a pre-existing, independent stream of communicative action that becomes integrated with other forms of goal-directed behaviour*' (Wertsch, 2007, p.181). Within DWR it seemed that the expansive learning cycle described in Chapter 2 would illustrate how the explicit use of mediational means might, through use, become internalised in ways which in turn permit their use as implicit mediation.

Engeström and Sannino (2010) describe how the expansive learning cycle (Figure 3.2) begins with the externalisation of internalised concepts which have been experienced as contradictions. In the steps that follow externalised concepts are considered, questioned and analysed by participants in activity to generate new cultural concepts which are modelled became distributed among the participants. In the final steps of the cycle as the new concepts become internalised they are available for application (Engeström and Sannino 2010, p.20), and where mediation which had initially been explicit may become increasingly implicit. The study would examine the role played by the conceptual model offered by CHAT as the

mediating means which could be either explicit or implicit in the team's work within the framework provided by the theory of expansive learning.

Figure 3.2: Sequence of learning actions in an expansive learning cycle
(Engeström and Sannino 2010, p.8)



3.4 THE CASE STUDY

My discussion has described how, by taking an interventionist research approach, this small scale case study would aim to support explorations at multiple levels. It would recognise that team members undertake their team roles in parallel with their primary roles as practitioners within the Welsh sector of a local authority in north east Wales. It would also aim to consider processes of team development and team working within multiple historical, local, regional and national contexts and explore how they could be facilitated and developed.

The study would aim to explore team development through work which would facilitate the articulation of concerns, the considerations of options, and the planning of strategies in constructive ways. The work would include opportunities to work towards self identified aims for developing practice, for professional development, and strengthen a marginal position. The study would seek not only to observe unfolding processes but to simultaneously promote team learning and study the processes in which it would occur.

The research would be grounded in perspectives drawn from cultural paradigm using an interventionist approach informed by notions of Developmental Work Research and the Change Laboratory which would be modified to take account of the specific context of the present study. Considerations of the study's approaches to evidence gathering, reflection processes and data analysis will be discussed separately in Chapter 4.

3.4.1 Research Questions

The study's aim would be to further understandings about how working together on self identified projects, supports the developing practice and professional development of team members and strengthens their position within the authority. The primary research question for the study would be:

- Why take an interventionist research approach to planning and effecting change in educational practice and what are the benefits for practitioners?

The study would also seek to consider the following secondary research questions:

- How can collaborative developmental work be structured to support the development of the project team as an effective vehicle for change?
- How does collaborative developmental work contribute to the learning and professional development of practitioners within the team?
- How can joint working on projects strengthen the professional identity of the team and its position within multiple levels of organisations?
- How do the team identify and agree the aims and objectives - object - of their work, and how do objects develop - expand - over time and in response to changing contexts?
- How can multiple researcher roles be integrated to facilitate development in a case study structured by interventionist research approaches?

3.4.2 The team

Over the course of the study the project team would comprise 10 practitioners including 7 special education needs co-ordinators (SENCo), 2 special needs teachers (SNT), and 1 educational psychologist (EP). Five of the SENCos worked in Welsh Medium schools and 2 in Bilingual Schools. My own role as researcher was undertaken in addition to my role as educational psychologist linked to the Welsh-medium and bilingual schools.

3.4.3 Team meetings - dialogues for change

The study was based on nine monthly meetings held between October 2007 and July 2008. The work had emerged from an earlier project involving practitioners from the 5 Welsh medium schools. Notions of Development Work Research (DWR) Engeström's (2007) would inform the theoretical grounding of the work where meetings would be structured by principles outlined by Engeström in the Change Laboratory (2007). However the approach would be adapted to take into account the fact that team meetings would not only provide a context for discussions about the development of conceptual solutions and tools, but would also include time spent in joint work in practical tasks and networking locally, regionally and nationally.

During team meetings evidence would be gathered in the form of audio recordings and contemporaneous shared minutes. Team meetings would be held at broadly monthly intervals throughout the school year. This represented a significant increase from earlier work. It was envisaged that the frequency of meetings would facilitate enhanced levels of communicative action and that over time the team would become more established, more mutually supportive of one another, less dependent on the external support, and increasingly engaged in planning and implementing their own work.

Additional data would be gathered through individual interviews with team members. The perspectives of partners who had an interest in the team's work would mainly be gathered through written responses. These parties would include local authority officers with an interest in the team's work and work partners e.g. publishers, practitioners from other authorities, and officers from national bodies.

3.5 THE RESEARCH STUDY – THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

Team processes would occur at multiple levels because team members also work together as members of a local authority consortium of schools. The team's work would draw on the expertise of the team gained through experience in their primary roles, and where processes and solutions developed in meetings would be trialled and implemented in liaison with school teams and as part of day to day practice. This would call for a flexible approach able to take account of the multiple social cultural and historical contexts within which the team's work would take place, and the multiple roles undertaken by members of the team.

As the team's work relates to issues emerging in discursive contexts the methodology adopted would draw on discursive elements within cultural

perspectives. In addition, as the purpose of the team's work would be to engender development for practice and for practitioners, interpretations of team processes would be based on the tenets of expansive learning (Engeström and Sannino, 2010). Discursive evidence would include audio recordings of dialogues and interviews. Analysis, discussion and reflection would be primarily based on qualitative analysis which would predominate in the case study. Discursive data would also be interrogated quantitatively where mixed methods would offer opportunities for the triangulation.

3.6 DISCOURSE – A RESEARCH TOOL

Audio recordings and transcripts of both team meetings and team member interviews would offer insights into team processes as they develop over time. Individual interviews would also provide opportunities to explore individual perspectives about the work.

3.6.1 Discursive data and the study

Discourse would be viewed as a tool that serves multiple purposes in mediating the work of the team including:

- to facilitate team processes and team development;
- for negotiating shared understandings and for planning and agreeing next steps;
- for negotiating roles within the team and for team members working within a range of contexts;
- to describe team actions and progress towards agreed objects;
- to describe how the team is positioned with respect to power and control within contexts within which it operates;
- to describe practitioner perspectives of change and professional development; and
- to explore issues of practitioners' affect and identity through narratives of change.

Practical considerations would mean that discursive research data would be gathered through the audio recording of meetings and interviews as opposed to video recording. Team members would adopt multiple roles in their participation in team meetings, for example moving between group discussion and individual presentations, practical tasks, record keeping, review and reflection. My own roles as participant researcher would preclude approaches to complex, obtrusive and directional forms data gathering. In practice the audio recorder would be placed in

the centre of the group at the beginning of meeting sessions and downloaded onto a computer during breaks.

3.6.2 Discourse: a cultural tool for distributed learning

I have described how the nature of this team its work and team processes called for some adaptations to be made to the change laboratory approach. For instance, the study would form part of a continuing process of joint working between a team of colleagues as opposed to a discrete series of meetings. Because of this methods which foreground historical contexts would be used to take account this continuity and its implications for team process and developmental project work. The study would recognise the team's work as an unfolding process where the temporal boundaries which would mark the beginning and end of evidence gathering for the present study reflect the need to bookend a manageable study rather than the beginning and end of team's work. Given that the purpose of the project had been to support the development of a mutually supportive team of practitioners, it was expected that the team would continue to meet and work together and with others over the longer term.

3.7 CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

I have described how the theoretical framework afforded by the concept of Expansive Learning (Sannino and Engeström, 2010) would inform the present study in Chapter 2. In this chapter I have provided an account of how notions of Expansive Learning informed the selection of the methodology to meet the demands of the research. I have described how Engeström's (1999) Expansive Learning Cycle would be applied in Developmental Work Research (DWR) which emphasises the interplay between individual and distributed development and object oriented activity would inform the framework for the study's methodology. This methodology is characterised by the structuring of meetings using an adapted change laboratory approach (Engeström, 2007) which I now describe.

3.7.1 The Change Laboratory and 'dual stimulation'

Vygotsky argues that an appropriate methodology for the study mediated action would include the provision of cultural artefacts to be used by participants to mediate problem solving activity (Vygotsky, 1978, p.74).

'The person, using the power of things or stimuli, controls his own behaviour through them, grouping them, putting them together, sorting them. In other words, the great uniqueness of the will consists of man having no power over his own behaviour other than the power that things have over his behaviour. But man subjects to himself the power of things over behaviour, makes them serve his own

purposes and controls that power as he wants. He changes the environment with the external activity and in this way affects his own behaviour, subjecting it to his own authority.” (Vygotsky, 1997, cited by Engeström, 2007, p. 365)

Cole (1996, p. 103) describes this as ‘the dual purpose of shaping and being shaped’ in the use of cultural tools. Engeström draws on Vygotsky’s description of the artefact-mediated nature of intentional action to propose the interventionist research approach he calls the change laboratory which he suggests has potential to facilitate explorations of how teams may use cultural objects as tools to mediate their learning.

Engeström’s change laboratory includes a number of instruments of mediation available for use by participants to solve the problems under consideration and a specific configuration of objects and the team to facilitate work based on the ‘dual stimulation’ approach. Engeström argues that the discourse occurring between the participants, their individual voices and perspectives as they respond within the Change Laboratory are central to the process.

Figure 3:3 Engeström’s prototypical change laboratory (2007)

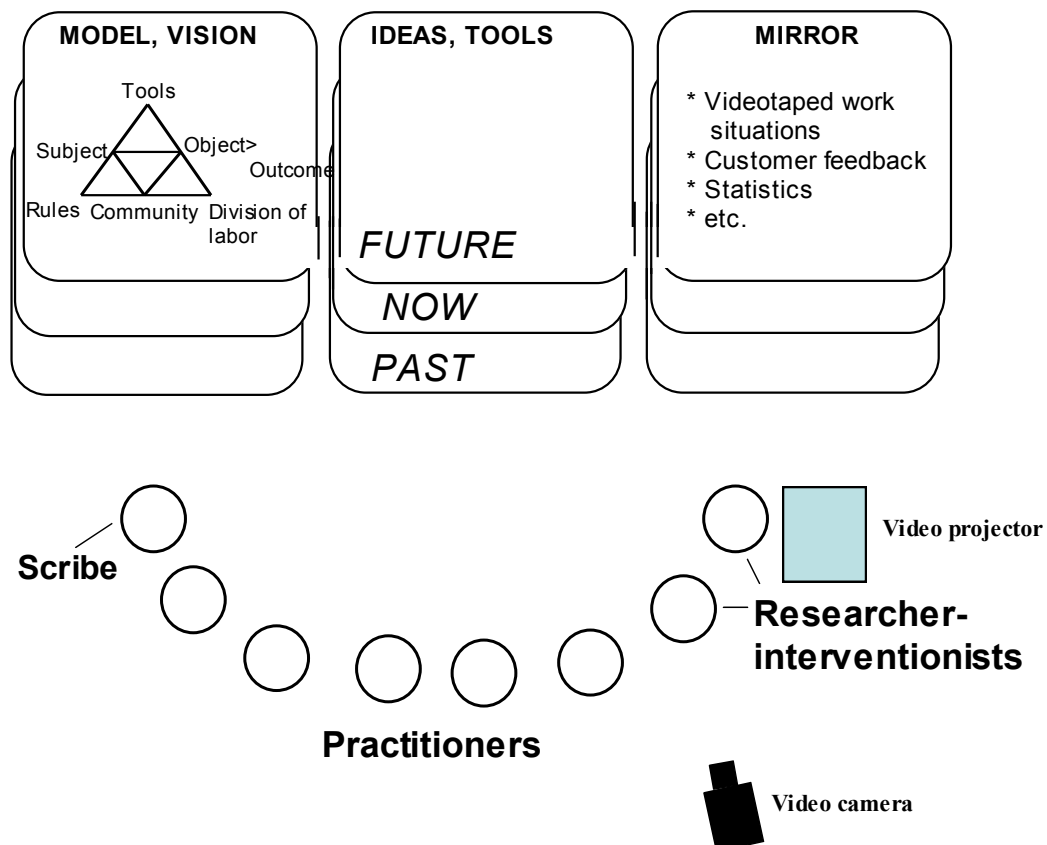


Figure 3.3 illustrates the layout of the change laboratory which comprises a 3x3 arrangement of mediational means. Engeström (2007) describes three forms of tools made available in the change laboratory:

- a theoretical model e.g. CHAT and conceptual analysis;
- the mirror surface used to represent and examine experiences e.g. problem, disturbances, and innovations; and
- the emerging new solutions and tools.

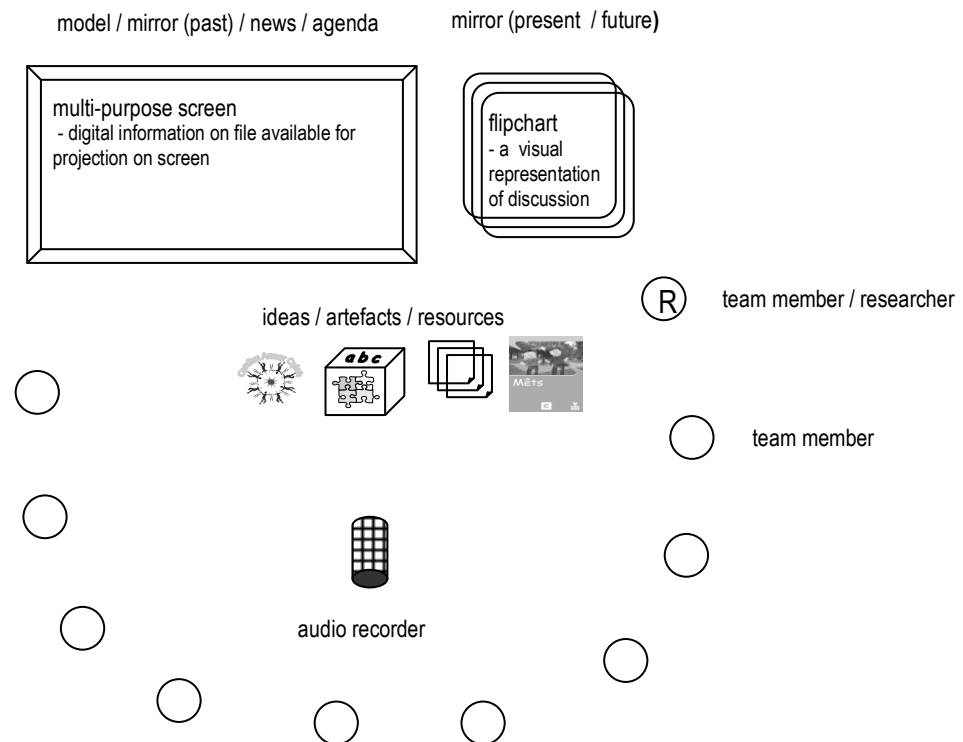
The change laboratory addresses temporal contexts as each of the three forms move between three layers of time – past, present and future. I have described how the team's meetings would include both discussions of object oriented activity using the CHAT model a cultural tool to explicitly mediate communicative action, and work on the more concrete tasks identified and to implement plans. However, further adjustments were made to the physical layout of the change laboratory as a way to manage with limited resources. In the sections that follow I describe the changes made to adjust for constraints resulting from these limitations.

3.7.2 Discourse and team meetings – dialogues for change

Some adjustments to Engeström's original change laboratory would be required to take account of external constraints and the limited resources available. A flexible setup, illustrated below (Fig 3.4) would emerge in response to patterns of communicative action and joint work on specific tasks undertaken in object oriented activity. Seating was arranged around a central space in a flexible arrangement easily adapted to facilitate multiple tasks.

The centrally placed audio recording device would optimise recordings of the team's discussions. Facilities available in teams meetings also included a computer, projector and screen and flip chart. Flip chart data could be removed from the pad and displayed on the walls as necessary. This use of the equipment would make available the facilities of 3x3 change laboratory arrangement described by Engeström (2007).

Figure 3.4 Team meeting set up – adapted from Engeström (2007)



Visual mirror data presented on screen might include data from earlier meetings or gathered in networking activities. The data which would be built up over the course of the case study and held on the computer would be available at all meetings for further reference as necessary. Additional stimuli e.g. commercially available resources and materials produced by the team in earlier meetings were made available for consideration and shared within this space.

3.7.3 Discourse and Developmental Work Research - audio data

Team meetings were conducted through the medium of Welsh. Some exceptions occurred during visits from non-Welsh speakers e.g. local authority officers. Audio data was preferred for:

- manageability – given the multiplicity of roles undertaken during the team's meetings the audio recorder provided a manageable, unobtrusive way to gather digital audio easily stored on computer; and
- inclusivity – in contrast to video information which is more directional, the audio recorder received information from every direction and when placed in the centre of the circle of seats, recorded the words spoken by each speaker equally well.

Audio data was transcribed in a multi step process by the researcher which included translation into English. Transcribed discursive data supplemented data gathered from the contemporaneous shared minutes recorded by team scribe on the flipchart. Together they would provide data for discourse analysis undertaken as part of the research. Specific comments which contribute to the analysis quoted in the thesis would be referred to the original speaker for confirmation that the translation provided by the researcher reflected their intended meaning. In any disagreement the interpretations of speakers would take precedence over researcher interpretations.

Team members would undertake multiple roles in the gathering of evidence during meetings, simultaneously initiating discussions and responding to ideas, and in developing team roles informed by their professional experience and expertise. In addition, the equipment available during meetings e.g. computer/projector, screen and flipchart would serve multiple functions during team meetings – switching between functions as necessary. For instance the flip chart could be used to record meeting processes, to review and to summarise team processes like decision making, and mirror data from earlier meetings was available and could be displayed and shared on the screen when required.

3.7.4 Stimulus 1 – computer / projector and screen setup

This was available to display visual data e.g. a representation of the CHAT model which would mediate team processes, support reflection, review and planning. This collection of mirror data would be extended over successive meetings to build into an archive available for consideration in meetings as necessary, to review past discussions and decision making, or to monitor progress towards goals. The set up would also permit access to the internet and online resources. This would be of particular benefit during project work to develop online animated versions of structured reading texts in partnership with partners from the National Grid for Learning (Wales).

In practice, the presentation for each meeting would include the agenda for the meeting where items would have been identified and agreed during earlier meetings. It would also include records of communication with others. An important part of each meeting would include whole team planning about next steps and their implementation. This would include decision making about tasks which would be undertaken between meetings and arrangements for the sharing of tasks.

3.7.5 Stimulus 2 – flip chart and contemporaneous minutes

The flip chart facility would be used by the team to gather together a record of the meeting's discussion. These contemporaneously gathered shared minutes recorded on flip chart paper would provide records of the main points of team discussions and plans for future work. The visual nature of this note taking, i.e. in large format visible to the whole team, permitted a joint approach to minute taking. Flip chart notes would include vital information available for reviews either mid-meeting or at the end of meetings. In practice team members would consider, challenge or agree the notes as they were taken and adjusted as necessary.

During early meetings the role of scribe would combine with the researcher role. However, over the course of the case study it would be more widely shared between by a number of team members. It would become accepted as a working document which reflected moment by moment exchanges as opposed to a polished end product. Multiple review processes would be brought to bear as part of this work which might include some or all of the following team perspectives: sharing, negotiating, collating, decision making and planning. As such they would support joint reflections on progress towards the team's aims. They would also provide a key source of information for sharing with interested others in the authority.

In summary the contemporaneous minutes accomplished multiple purposes, for instance as a tool to facilitate the team's work within team meetings:

- a visual record of the team's discussion as points would be negotiated and agreed – the notes were used as a work in progress and to facilitate whole team participation in minute taking;
- for record of plans, tasks to be undertaken and the team members undertaking responsibility for them, and goals for completion times; and
- visual material for ongoing shared reflection and review.

However, the notes would also fulfil specific roles to support reflection, analysis and dissemination including:

- a tool for reflection and analysis e.g. when developing the raw data from the flip chart sheets into minutes;
- as a source of information for networking - a means for sharing and working with interested partners:
 - for accountability – minutes would be forwarded to line managers and the local authority officers; and

- for communication with wider audiences – minutes would frequently form the raw data for presentations to and communications with parties outside the local authority; and also
- as a source of research data where they would provide a succinct overview of the direction of team working, and the factors that contributed to decision making, action and outcomes of the team's work to supplement audio data to support the analysis of aspects of the teams work.

Taken as a whole, the contemporaneous minutes would build into a chronological record of the team's work as documents which would provide an overview of individual meetings and insights into trends and developments over the course of the study.

3.7.6 Stimulus 3 - ideas, artefacts and resources

Figure 3:4 above illustrates horseshoe shaped seating arrangements which would maximise visibility of the screen and flipchart. The central space within the arrangement could be used flexibly to display artefacts shared to mediate teamwork e.g. materials for teaching and learning activities, resources developed by the team, published resources used by team members, and materials developed by individual team members in the course of their individual practice for sharing or team review.

3.8 DISCOURSE: A TOOL FOR NEGOTIATING MEANING, FOR BUILDING SHARED PURPOSE, AND FOR COMMUNICATIVE ACTION

The team's mode of working together in meetings was to use spoken and written language to share ideas, to explore problems, to explore possibilities, and to suggest possible solutions and to try things out. Mutually respectful practice and active listening were key to effective exchange of ideas. Over time team members had extended and deepened their relationships and this developing familiarity would become central to effective team work. For instance several individual team members would comment that they had become more relaxed in team meetings and more willing to share their views

'I think that the frequency of meetings has helped us just to get to know each other better, so whereas initially there was this wariness, although we were generally comfortable with each other, you kind of dance around for a while while you are sussing everybody out.' (SNT1)

Several had reported to feeling rather in awe of some colleagues in the early stages which had led them to feel reluctant to make suggestions or to disagree with others because of fears that their comments might not be appropriate or be well received.

'Everyone has ideas to help each other. I find a lot easier now because although I knew SENCo1 and SENCo5 (before). To tell you the truth I was a bit scared of SENCo1 because she is very ...(outspoken). But when you get to know her she is so funny, and she would do anything for you.' (SENC02)

This lack of confidence is particularly interesting given that the team are part of a small local authority, and a very small sector within it and often knew one another socially. Feelings of wariness and uncertainty of the research processes, of one another, and of overreaching would continue to be explicitly expressed.

'Although I was willing to have a go I used to feel a bit afraid of the publishing and worry that we were being too ambitious'. (SENC04)

In conducting the study it would be essential to ensure that team dynamics should reflect democratic ideals and principles. A key research priority would be to avoid authoritative direction or domination detrimental to the team's developmental project work either by myself as researcher or by the research process, at the same time as facilitating the dynamics of team working processes to sustain and develop trajectories of change.

3.8.1 Researcher perspectives of multiple roles: factors that constrain and support the team's work and the research process

Considerations of my own multiple roles and their implications for supporting team processes and undertaking the research would be particularly important. They include those associated with my primary responsibilities as member of the educational psychology service provided by the local authority. These roles would co-exist with team roles which would include being a team member, the participant researcher and system minder (Glenny, 2005). Without appropriate care such a combination of roles could privilege the researcher role in ways which could potentially distort or dominate team processes. My intention would be to avoid such distortions without abdicating potential facilitating roles. Glenny's (2005) characterisation of the 'systems minder' role would provide a framework for reflective and reflexive monitoring of the facilitation role within the researcher role. Glenny, whose work draws on multiple experiences of developing inter-agency systems for supporting children, argues that a systems minder role contrasts sharply with a more traditional role of 'project leader' who takes charge and directs the team and its work. Figure 3.5 below, provides an illustration of some of the roles I would undertake as researcher.

Figure 3.5 Researcher roles in the present study



In her description of multiagency working, Glenny (2005, p.173) observes that:

‘...the ‘systems minder seemed to have a role to ensure the core groups carried the following responsibilities:

- *guarding project purpose;*
- *receiving issues and concerns;*
- *freeing up communication links/ feedback loops;*
- *orchestrating relationships;*
- *monitoring task completion; and*
- *deciding what needs to be held tight and what can be left loose.*

In particular Glenny highlights how the systems minder role lies in ensuring that the team share ‘caretaking’ tasks in contrast with project leader roles which would tend to assume overall responsibility for managing the team. Whilst this facilitation tended to be implicit rather than explicitly stated, these multiple roles would be recognised and valued by team members.

‘So we had (the research), your guidance and the time was created by you by saying that we would have these monthly meetings etc. You were there laying all this groundwork and that was just facilitating everything. It just made it all quite an easy process because everything fell into place and we fell into a routine and that enabled everything to develop quite nicely.’ (SNT1)

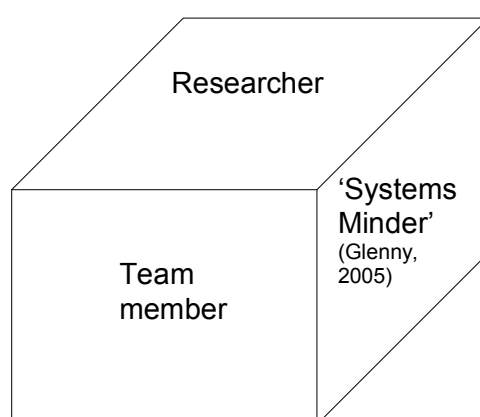
3.8.2 Multiple dimensions within the researcher role

Further reflections led me to conceptualise the researcher role as three dimensional. Firstly, because of the nature of the team I would be keen to operate as a participant and contribute

to the work in ways that do not privilege my other roles, where my research interests would support rather than obstruct the decision making of the team. New directions would be identified and agreed by the project team as a whole in response to the priorities of the practitioners themselves, neither donated by external agencies nor dictated by a team leader.

The second dimension would relate to the researcher role which I would undertake with the consent of the team. My request for their consent would be renewed at the start of each meeting of the team and each individual interview. The third dimension of my role would involve 'minding' the work. This combines routine administrative tasks e.g. booking venues and circulating minutes and, more importantly, maintaining an overview of the team's work, its processes and progress towards agreed goals. An important part of the role would involve networking with partners becoming involved in the team's developmental project work. Figure 3.6 illustrates this 3-dimensional nature of researcher roles within the team and the team's work where each dimension is understood to have equal importance.

Figure 3.6 Combining roles: the researcher role in 3-dimensions



3.9 TEAM ROLES AND TEAM PERSPECTIVES

I have described how the present study would explore whole team perspectives and individual team member perspectives with a view to developing understandings of how developmental project working promote change for practice for practitioners. Such perspectives would be gathered through discursive methodologies based on the narrative of those involved drawing on the work of Wertsch (1998, p.106) in which he characterises narrative as a cultural tool: *'the tendency of narrative to 'grasp together' diverse elements such as 'agents, goals, means, interactions, circumstances, unexpected results, etc.'* In particular, it was envisaged that narrative

approaches would provide opportunities to develop insights into the perspectives of team members.

3.9.1 Narratives of experience

Narrative data would be gathered in audio recordings of interviews with individuals during and following the research period. Narrative data would highlight individual experiences of the work and individual perceptions of the impact of the work from the perspectives of individual team members and following reflection. In addition to interviews with individual team members, the views of others with an interest in the team and its work would be canvassed. These would include managers and local authority officers, regional or national partners, and commercial partners e.g. Publisher1. Audio recordings were made of researcher conversations where individual team members would be invited to share their perspectives of the team, the work and the impact of the work for change for them personally, professionally, for the learners they support, schools, the local authority and further afield. The CHAT triangle would be used as a visual prompt to invite and structure the discussions. Theory relating to personal and professional identity, networking and agency would inform the interpretation and analysis of the narrative evidence gathered.

3.9.2 Team perspectives: identity, change and professional development

The present study's research questions centre on how developmental project work provides a vehicle for supporting change for practitioners, both through professional development and also through strengthening a marginal position. Interview data from conversations with team members, and others working within Welsh-medium education would provide discursive data to inform the analysis of change emerging for practice and for the team.

Leadbetter (2006) considers how environments can contribute to reconstructions resulting in new and multiple professional identities. Notions of contradiction and struggle inherent in these ideas highlight the active nature of joint working and raise questions about how individuals cope in these situations. Vasilyuk (1991) offers the notion of 'experience' to consider this. He defines 'experience' as '*an active, result-producing internal process which actually transforms the psychological situation*' (op. cit., p.20), a creative process of adjusting to change by actively seeking alternative possibilities from among those available and the reconstruction of new perspectives that would be adjusted to changed contexts. Such conceptualisations of experience

would provide a framework for exploring how team members adjust to changes emerging from our work.

For instance the present study would aim to investigate how the team's work engenders change to strengthen its marginal position. It would also aim to consider how multifaceted practitioner identities may be reconstructed and develop while recognising that the wider context is unlikely to be materially changed as the Welsh language seems likely to remain a minority language, at least for the foreseeable future. It was anticipated that team members would, through participation in joint action, come to reconstruct their professional identities as being active agents for developing practice, as opposed to passive recipients of a status quo.

3.9.3 Networking, boundary crossing and rule breaking

Holland and Lave (2000, p.29) emphasise the interrelationships between individuals and their environment, using the term 'history in person' to describe how individual identities are formed in practice through 'collective work of invoking, improvising, appropriating and refusing', in shaping and reshaping contexts. Individual accounts of constructions and reconstructions of professional identities would be charted. The present study would aim to invoke narrative approaches to document changes as strengthening a marginal position for the team and for team members.

3.9.4 Relational agency

Edwards' (2006) argues that while induction into values and key skills are important in professional learning, development should involve more than a mastery of established practices. She argues that it should also:

'...include a capacity for interpreting and for approaching problems, for contesting interpretations, for reading the environment, for drawing on the resources there, for being a resource for others, for focusing on the core objects of the professions'.
(Edwards, 2006, p.179)

She suggests that the notion of '*relational agency i.e. a capacity to align one's thoughts and actions with those of others to interpret problems of practice and to respond to those interpretations*' (op. cit., pp.169-70), as a way to consider aspects of development relation to the ability to network with others. In 'relational agency', alignments in joint action require skills for eliciting recognising and negotiating how this may be achieved – 'knowing how to know who'. She argues that 'relational agency' offers a means to further understandings about joint action. Notions of relational agency which would inform discussions of the team in community with others in the building and developing networks between one another, within settings

and with other schools, across agencies locally, and within regional and national contexts would be central to the work.

3.9.5 The team and the research:

multiple purposes, multiple contexts, individual strengths and shared needs

The team's work would focus on developmental project work to effect change for practice in object oriented activity. Emerging objects would reflect the team's response to the challenges they face in practice and their agreed priorities. Whilst team working would tend to focus on team processes and the outcomes of team working, they would also recognise that the development of the team and ways of working as a team would also form part of the team's work.

Figure 3.7 Complementary aims

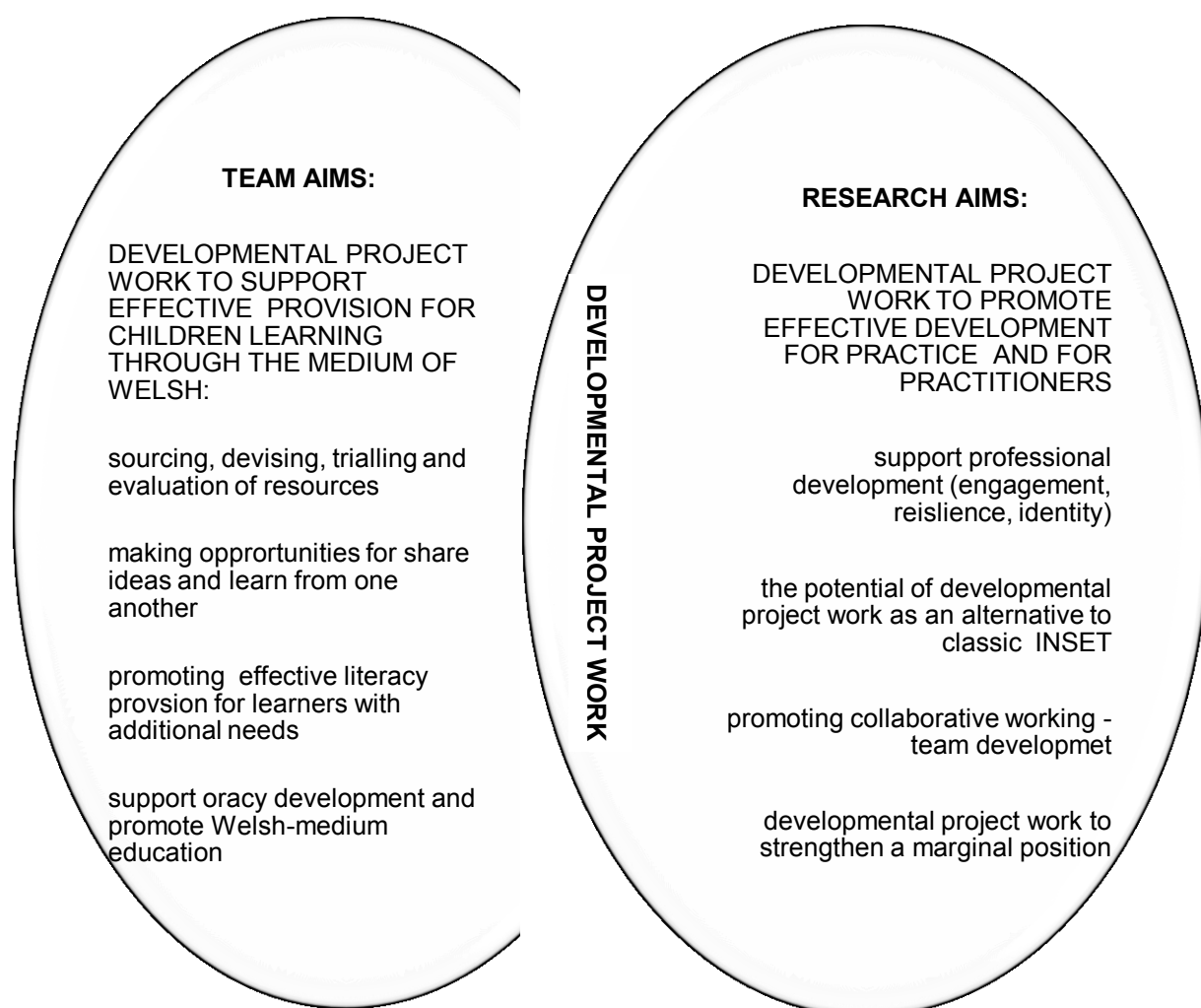


Figure 3.7, above, illustrates of some of the ways in which the aims of the team and team working and the aims of the research differ and yet complement one another.

The intersection of the diagram underlines the way developmental project work supports the overall aims and underlines how differing aims can be simultaneously accomplished and explored in shared activity using Developmental Work Research approaches.

3.9.6 Individuals, the team and community

I have described how the team is composed of practitioners working with the Welsh-medium education including primary school SENCos. I have also described how the SENCos represent seven schools which include Welsh language schools and bilingual schools; large town schools with single form entry and small rural schools operating vertically grouped classes including as many as five year groups. The team would include two SNTs one of whom has specialist expertise in making literacy support for learners with specific literacy difficulties within mainstream settings. The other SNT has expertise and experience of making provision for learners with more general additional needs in specialist provision each morning in an arrangement where pupils return to mainstream classes within their local schools each afternoon. I was also the link educational psychologist to each of the seven schools.

3.9.7 Perspectives on the team and its work

Networking within the local authority, regionally and nationally would present opportunities to discover ways in which the team's work was valued.

Figure 3.8: Eliciting the views of partners about the team and its work

Perspectives on the team and its work

1. *Please share your views about the ways in which the team and its work have facilitated change for practice.*
2. *Please share your views about ways in which the work has facilitated change and professional development for the team as a whole and for individual team members.*
3. *Please share your views of the challenges that team members face in their practice and how they motivate or constrain the team, team members and the work.*
4. *How do you think the outcomes of the team's work will benefit learners, teachers and education services?*
5. *The team works in local, regional and national contexts. Please share your views about how the team's standing has changed as a result of its work and what this has meant for the team, for individual team members, and for the local authority.*
6. *Please share your view of the processes used by the team and how they have supported team working, networking and professional development.*
7. *Please add any other comments you have about the team's work.*

Over time the team and individual team members would develop partnerships with local, regional and national organisations involved in making provision for learners in Welsh-medium Education. The team's key partners and interested parties would be

invited to share their views of the team's work by responding to the following points listed in the box Figure 3.8 above.

Local authority officers, managers and headteachers involved in the provision of Welsh-medium and bilingual education were invited to contribute their view of the teams' work and its impact for learners and learning. Two partner practitioners from north east Wales would be invited to contribute their view of the teams' work and its impact for learners and learning.

Over the course of the work the team would develop links with organisations across Wales in a range of contexts. Three national and commercial partners would also be invited to contribute their views. Positive responses would provide discursive evidence in written form. This would be included as part of the data gathered for qualitative analysis.

4: APPROACHES TO DATA ANALYSIS

In this chapter my discussion turns to considerations of the approaches to the analysis of discursive evidence gathered during the study. Data analysis undertaken using mainly qualitative methods would be supported by straightforward quantitative analysis of transcripts of excerpts from team meetings. Quantitative analysis would aim to elucidate shifts in participation over the course of the study as a whole. Quantitative analysis would also aim to quantify levels of agreement within the team about key themes emerging in individual interviews with team members.

In his exposition of Chaos, Gleik (1998, p.304) asserts, '*Simple systems give rise to complex behaviour. Complex systems give rise to simple behaviour.*' This principle is one that I have usefully applied in many contexts when planning interventions to support the development of learners. Applied in the context of the present study the notion would inform the decision to select straightforward qualitative and quantitative approaches of analysis. Discursive evidence gathered in audio recordings of team discussions and team member interviews and subsequently translated and transcribed. Audio data would be augmented by contemporaneous shared minutes taken in note form on flipcharts during meetings. Further evidence would be collected in the elicited responses of more peripherally involved practitioners, generally contributed in written form.

In Chapter 3 I described how discursive data from audio recordings of meetings and interviews was transcribed and translated from Welsh into English. Qualitative analysis would include ongoing consultation with team members in order to ensure that researcher interpretations reflected the intended meanings of team members. It was envisaged that such a mixed approach would offer opportunities for validation through triangulation and crystallization (Robson, 2002, p.174, Richardson and St Pierre, 2005, p.963).

4.1 QUALITATIVE APPROACHES TO ANALYSIS

4.1.1 Data analysis and applications of the theory of Expansive Learning

As with the research design and methodology methods of analysis would be informed by theory from cultural perspectives. In Chapter 2 I described how the theoretical framework afforded by the concept of expansive learning (Engeström and Sannino, 2010) would provide the foundations in which the present study would be grounded. In Chapter 3 I outlined how the theory would be applied to the methodology adopted for the study. In this chapter my discussion will describe how

the elements of Engeström's theory of Expansive Learning would inform strands of analysis in the study.

Engeström and Sannino (2010) draw together the multiple elements which together constitute the theory of expansive learning. Elements which would apply to processes of analysis in present study include:

- Social cultural perspectives of development and learning the foundations on which considerations of mediation in processes of development (Vygotsky, 1978, 1987);
- Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) – (Daniels et al, 2010) a framework for the consideration of mediation occurring within dynamic interactions within the team, between the team and its contexts:
 - Mediation: the role of discourse as a cultural tool for mediated action;
 - Discourse: a tool for distributed learning;
 - Discursive action - team working;
 - Networking: the team in community - Relational Agency;
 - Subject: considerations of identity, professional development and change;
 - Issues of affect and identity - narratives of experience,;
 - Object oriented activity: Developmental Work Research (DWR);
 - Positioning, power and control.

These are considered in relation to the study's processes of analysis in the sections that follow.

4.2 SOCIOCULTURAL PERSPECTIVES OF DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

Vygotsky's (1978, 1987) view of learning is that it is social and mediated by signs and symbols. He argues that learners actively appropriate the facilities afforded by such cultural tools to support the processes of development. Vygotsky's accounts emphasise how 'spontaneous' understandings arise naturally, mediated by and within the context of social interaction. In contrast, he argues that 'scientific' understandings come into being as a result of the mediation provided by formal instruction. The present study would give equal value to both of forms of knowing, adopting Lave and Wenger's (1991) view that 'mature understandings' are formed when spontaneous understandings and scientific understandings become interwoven.

4.3 CULTURAL HISTORICAL ACTIVITY THEORY (CHAT)

Engeström (1999) argues that Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) offers a theoretical framework to structure developmental activity and also to study it. He argues that in CHAT developmental outcomes are seen to come about when those seeking change - the 'subject' - take action to bring about change - the 'object' in ways that are mediated by cultural or material tools within social, cultural and historical contexts.

4.4 MEDIATION: THE ROLE OF CULTURAL TOOLS

Vygotsky's accounts (1978, 1987) emphasise how learning is mediated by signs and symbols. He argues that thinking and speaking are inextricably linked and that because of this thinking and speaking must be considered as a unified unit of analysis in work to clarify understandings of the *'functional role of verbal meaning in the act of thinking'* (1987, p.249).

Given the nature of the team's work and its aims, discourse would mediate the team's shared action - discursive action, and provide a platform for shared learning - distributed cognition, where development would occur at the level of the whole team as well as for individual team members. Accordingly the analysis would focus on approaches to discourse analysis.

4.4.1 Discourse: a cultural tool for distributed learning

Edwards and Potter (1992, p.153) suggest that the study of discourse is not simply a method of analysis, but also offers a perspective on psychological life. They argue that, conversational versions of events (memories, descriptions, formulations) are constructed to do communicative, interactional work. They propose discursive action as a unit of analysis because discourse is not only an active way to construct knowledge and understanding, but also a reflection of them.

The present study is informed by discursive theory in which discourse is viewed as a dialogic tool for distributed working, learning, reflection and research, where conversations are viewed as forms of action to do work. Conceptualisations of the activity occurring within the team to support progress towards identified objects and facilitate desired outcomes will be important to the present study. Mercer (2000, p.1), asserts that, *'Language is a tool for carrying out joint intellectual activity, a distinctive human inheritance designed to serve the practical and social needs of individuals and communities,'* and that *'language provides us with a means for*

thinking together, for jointly creating knowledge and understanding.' (Mercer, 2000, p.15)

Cole and Engeström (1993, p.15) suggest that a cultural consideration of distributed cognition requires an exploration of how learning is shared between people by virtue of their social roles. This too, would have a particular resonance in the context of the present study, which would seek to explore the changes for practice and for practitioners that emerge in developmental project work. Accordingly, the study would focus on the discursive actions of people engaged in joint activities to explore issues, share knowledge and understanding, build agreement and learn together. For these reasons, the analysis of the discursive data gathered would be used to consider the processes and outcomes of project work in supporting change for practitioners and for practice.

4.4.2 Discourse analysis

Wetherall (2001a, p.1) argues that discourse analysis is not only '*...concerned with the meanings that events and experiences hold for social actors*', it is also '*...a theory of language and communication, a perspective on social interaction and an approach to knowledge construction across history, societies and cultures.*' In her discussion she identifies (op. cit., p.5) three central domains of discourse which relate to this definition, namely the study of social interaction, the study of minds, selves and sense-making, and the study of culture and social relations.

My discussion of discourse and its application to the present study in Chapter 2 highlights the importance of each of these domains in the present study. For instance, the study is located within the context of educational practice within a minority language, Welsh, which nevertheless can be viewed as being privileged by legislation such as the Welsh Language Act 1993. Because of this the study would aim address tensions with reference to the notion of authoritative discourse (Bakhtin 1981; Wertsch, 1998), namely the study of culture and social relations. Approaches from critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2001) may be used to explore the nature of social power and dominance and how discourse structures may be instrumental in the perpetuation of dominance and the enactment of power relations. However, the present study would aim more to strengthen the team's marginal position through activity to develop alternative perspectives than to enumerate the inequalities they encounter. It would also aim to support reconstructions of professional identity associated with active endeavour in the development of solutions to problems they

encounter. On reflection I decided that such changes would be most effectively explored through examinations of the narratives of experience expressed by team members in relation to these issues.

Discourse analysis such as found in 'conversation analysis' (Wetherall, 2001b) whose systematic focus is targeted towards the detail of actual verbal interaction take a 'look and see' stance towards discursive data as opposed to applications of more interpretative approaches such as those used in critical discourse analysis. In contrast, in approaches based on 'discursive psychology' (Edwards and Potter, 1992) discourse is viewed both as providing evidence and also a framework for analysis. Here discourse is viewed as mediating social interaction in communicative action (Mercer, 2000). Such approaches would provide contexts for considerations of discourse mediating the social interactions of team working and networking. Discursive psychology also draws on Bakhtin's (1986) notion of the 'utterance' being shared between the speaker and listener, and of 'multi-voicedness' where utterances are viewed as being 'filled with dialogic overtones' (1986, p102) - the diversity of multiple and complex perspectives which may be encountered when working and learning in teams such as in the present study.

However, the study would aim to study the dynamic interaction between team members as they work together on developmental projects with a view to understanding the role of 'talk' as the tool to take action and do work, communicative action. For this purpose the study would attend to the sequences of conversation occurring between team members as they work together in practical activity within the interventionist framework provided by developmental work research approaches.

This discussion highlights how approaches to the analysis of discourse may take different forms in order to meet the needs of the study to which they are applied. The present study's aim would be to examine how discourse mediates the work of the team over time in a sequence of meetings using methods based in the discursive psychology tradition. It would also canvas the views of individual team members expressed in interviews in which narratives forms would predominate. Emerging key themes would be illustrated through quotations from transcripts of meetings and the individual interviews

In the present study the focus for discourse analysis would also be to identify emerging themes in object oriented activity – discursive action – where team dialogues mediate action in developmental project work. Because of this a form of

discourse analysis with which to focus on how discourse can support shared thinking and distributed learning in sequences of team talk over time would be essential.

The study would take an interventionist approach using developmental work research methodologies. Mercer (2005) suggests that sociocultural discourse analysis takes an observational and critical stance towards discourse similar to that adopted in the linguistic tradition. However, whereas linguistic discourse analysis strives for detachment in order to observe the processes of language unfolding, those using sociocultural discourse analysis aim to take an interventional approach in studies of discourse with a view to examining its developmental outcomes.

In its aim to explore the trajectories of change occurring as a result of the developmental work research the research would seek to track the emergence of shared perspectives, understandings and identities of team members in discursive activity occurring over time in a sequence of team meetings. An analytic approach would be required which would allow an examination of communicative action in the externalisation of contradictions associated with complex cultural issues in object oriented activity. It would also chart the developmental outcomes of the activity and the learning which would occur across the whole body of discursive data gathered over the course of the study.

The analysis would seek to observe changes occurring within the patterns of communicative action which, over time, would contribute to changes for both the team's practice and the collective and individual professional identity of team members. It was envisaged that such changes would emerge incrementally through longitudinal sequences of communicative action occurring across a sequence of meetings rather than as a result of individual instances of discourse occurring within specific meetings. The analysis would also be required to highlight patterns of communication in which expressions of the experience of contradictions would be expressed, considered and reconsidered across the whole sequence of team meetings – that is, how the experience of change would be observed in the discursive action of teams over the course of the research period.

Daniels (2010, p.382) argues for forms of analysis and description with which to identify juxtapositions between trends in the communicative action of the team and the transformations which occur in organisational practice. Middleton (2011, p.522) describes such analysis as a way to *'trace the emergence of what can be taken as*

the collective and distributed knowledge of people who are charged with the task of working together'.

The present team would work towards self identified goals mediated by developmental work research activity. It would engage in developmental project work over time to address the challenges shaped by complex and multiple encounters within cultural and historical contexts encountered by team members in practice. Middleton and Brown (2005) argue that understandings of experience should be built on notions which include the ways in which individual experience is afforded by and contributes to collective activity over time. They argue that the interactional organisation of experience should be viewed '*...as standing in relation to a wider experience of enduring in time...*' where '*...experience is constructed via various interdependences, such as between the incidental and the intentional and as both individually and collectively relevant*' (op. cit. p.226). Daniels (2010) draws attention to the fact that the contributions of individuals to talk in meetings are contingently related to each other in terms of the sequential organisation of their talk. Additionally, Middleton and Brown (2005) stress that such understandings tend not to be expressed in '*the more or less orderly sequence of turns that unfold in a given interaction*'. (p.227) but rather emerge over time in multiple sequences of talk.

Middleton (2010, p.91) suggests that approaches to discursive analysis which seek to reveal change, development and learning require a shift from '*framing communication as descriptions corresponding to states in and of the world, to the performative organisation of communicative action*' where attention can be focused on what talk accomplishes. In the present study the emergent engagement of team members in successive meetings would be considered where what would be learned is observed in the team's talk in cycles of expansive learning (Engeström and Sannino, 2010). Middleton (op. cit. p.92) proposes an approach to analysis he calls 'D' analysis as an '*analytic resource for examining the stake and interest of those involved*' with which cycles of development occurring between participants working in teams can be tracked, and in which contributions expressing tensions and contradictions are externalised, considered and developed in instances of talk over time.

Middleton, (2011, p.530) argues that the 'D' analysis protocol could be used to provide '*a means for making visible emergent forms of professional learning in a longitudinal research interventions*'. Crucially, in terms of the present study, 'D' analysis would allow the contributions of team members to team discussions over the

course of a series of meetings to be observed, considered and reconsidered in light of the expansions in the team's object oriented activity occurring within the team and the emerging outcomes so that patterns of development would be revealed.

Daniels (2010, p.388) describes how the cyclical application of 'D' analysis enabled reading, reviewing, interrogating, collating and comparing of recorded data gathered during interventionist sessions using Engeström's Change Laboratory (2007) in the Learning in and for Interagency Working (LIW) research study.

'...related sequences (of talk) were identified and ... grouped together into strands of talk that wove their way through the progress of each series of workshops. These strands (comprised of different types of sequences) witnessed the progression of learning through and with talk in the workshops.' (Daniels, 2010, p.389)

In the next section I provide an account of the potential strengths and limitations of the 'D' analysis approach in the context of the present study.

4.4.3 Analysis of discursive action – 'D' analysis

Middleton, (2011, 2010) and Daniels (2010) provide accounts of framework for discourse analysis developed in the 'Learning in and for inter-agency working' project, 'D' Analysis, which emerged as a complimentary strand to CHAT based analysis in that study. Middleton (2010) suggests that this approach to the analysis of discursive action in groups addresses and analyses how a topic of discussion can be used as a resource - a tool to do work. Middleton identifies five strands of 'D' analysis which include:

- Diexis – pointing out, raising an issue for consideration;
- Delineation – movements towards definition: qualification, orderability and expansion;
- Deliberations – movements towards consensus;
- Departures – movements towards new conceptualisations; and
- Developments – movements towards agreements for action.

Cyclical applications of 'D' analysis to the discursive data generated during team meetings were proposed to offer a framework for reviewing and comparing sequences of talk to describe processes of change which highlight trajectories of shared thinking in the team's decision making and emerging developmental project work. The approach would highlight the negotiation of agreements to reconcile contradictions and conflicting perspectives in the formation of mature concepts. It would also highlight shared and distributed processes in object oriented activity.

The present study's aim would be to adopt an interventionist approach using developmental work research methods to facilitate changes for practice and practitioners in work centred on self identified developmental project work emerging in a sequence of meetings. Adopting a 'D' analysis approach in the present study would enable examinations of trajectories of change occurring over time. It would provide the means to take into account the interplay between individual expressions of contradictions occurring during team meetings, and the team's subsequent shared considerations of them as they became clarified, the development of shared understandings about problems experienced by the team, in the emergence and articulation of agreements for action and new ways of working.

In addition, the team's activity would be framed in terms of its engagement in developmental project work to address these contradictions and challenges. Team member experiences would be recognised as specific interactions which '*coexist with a virtual, unlimited set of experiences*' (Middleton and Brown, 2005, p. 227). Team activity would occur within the cultural and historical experience of the team and individual team members and within the multiple and varied contexts in which it is positioned. A 'D' analysis approach would afford particular benefits to the study of the processes of mediating change emerging over the course of a succession of monthly meetings interspersed with opportunities to apply the outcome of developmental project work in practice in their settings, such as in the trialling of prototype resources within classroom practice.

The choice to use 'D' analysis to over conversation analysis which would support detailed examinations of specific conversations would restrict possibilities for examinations of the impact of particular utterances and for examinations of specific instances of disagreement and conflict within the team. However, I judged that the particular aims of the study would benefit from the adoption of a wider focus. This was because transformations for the team would occur cumulatively, emerging as topics of discussion occurring during successive meetings. 'D' analysis provided a tool with which to track the movements and shifts in perspectives and progress towards development and change.

In addition, adopting a 'D' analysis approach would also preclude the use of critical discourse analysis approaches and consequently restrict the examination of the impact of social power and dominance between the group and others. However, the focus of the study would lie in mediating changes in the way practitioners respond to the challenges of the team's marginal position rather than in documenting the ways in

which these challenges are experienced. Moreover, as the approach is recently developed it has yet to be extensively reviewed in the literature.

Despite the acknowledged limitations, I concluded that, the present study would seek to uncover transformations of the team's perspectives about their capacity to effect change within the context of practice through the medium of the Welsh language, and moreover, as these changes would occur over time in cycles of expansive learning the limitations described above were of less moment than the benefits described above which would be afforded by the application of 'D' analysis.

Accordingly, 'D' analysis would be adopted as an important strand of discourse analysis in the study. It would provide a tool for the analysis of talk relating to object oriented activity over time and offer a way to chart trajectories of emerging learning and development. It would also provide a tool to illustrate how the team's established perspectives and ways of arguing would be reformulated and transformed into new strategies and activities as part of learning what it is to become engaged with and in developmental project work.

In this section I have argued that the strength of 'D' analysis to the present study would lie in its ability to provide a structure for charting changes occurring in topics of discussion externalised as contradictions over successive meetings, and to track the movements and shifts in perspectives and progress towards development and change.

4.5 CULTURAL HISTORICAL ACTIVITY THEORY CONCEPTS OF 'SUBJECT': IDENTITY AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In their description of the theoretical roots of Expansive Learning, (Engeström and Sannino, 2010) stress the importance of attending to individual voices within the team. They argue that expansive learning draws on multi-voiced processes of debate, negotiation and orchestration which may include juxtapositions of genres in *'all the conflicting and complementary voices of the various groups and strata in the activity system under scrutiny'* (op. cit., p.5). The study would aim to explore possibilities for the redistribution of power as practitioners make opportunities to use talk to suit their own purposes, not only through communicating in Welsh, but also by addressing topics of their own choosing.

4.5.1 Issues of affect and identity – narratives of experience

The present case study is based on foundations of cultural, social and historical theory which has developed from Vygotsky's (1978, 1987) work on learning and

development where learning is refracted not only through cognitive processes but also through emotional responses: that learning has both cognitive and affective elements; is active and mediated; and social and personal. Vygotsky (1997, p.91) suggests that the goal of education is to develop, '*not a definite quantity of skills, but particular creative capacities for rapid and skilful social orientation.*'

Wertsch (1998, p.106) describes how narrative can be viewed as a cultural tool with cognitive functions, arguing that it provides a way to gather together diverse elements e.g. agents, goals, tools, contradictions, so that they can be considered as a single whole. The study would also adopt narrative approaches to the analysis of data gathered in team processes and their implications of team processes to determine, agree, and pursue common goals for the resolution of contradictions and conflict, and the implications of this for the discursive constructions and reconstructions of individual and collective professional identity, networking and agency.

Whilst the study would aim to document team member perspectives articulated in narrative form, it would also recognise the importance of narrative approaches within articulations of research processes. Ethnographic approaches that track the history and development of practice influenced by Geertz (1973) would inform the discussion which would include the analysis and interpretation of researcher accounts where rich discursive data forms 'thick accounts' with the inevitable caveat that in any account it must be borne in mind that what we have should be viewed as being interpretations of interpretations (Geertz, 1973, p.15).

4.6 OBJECT ORIENTED ACTIVITY –

DEVELOPMENTAL WORK RESEARCH (DWR)

The notion of 'object', - 'action to bring about change', is central to analyses of activity based on DWR and CHAT, as are processes for negotiating agreement through contradictions and conflicting perspectives in the formation of mature concepts. Exploring the 'objects' that emerge during the team's work, and which are revealed through the discursive action of the team, the contradictions that drive them, the solution oriented strategies – 'tools' - that the team adopt to address them and the resolutions which may emerge, will be central to the analysis which will include accounts of the team work processes as discursive action framed using the D' analysis constructs. I have described team members' experience of asymmetries in the discourse of service provision within the wider contexts as powerful

authoritative discourses (Bakhtin, 1981, p.342) explored by Wertsch (1998, p.65) and the implications of this for the team's work to strengthen a marginal position.

4.6.1 Positioning, power and control:

modes of working and learning within institutions

Daniels (2006, p.46) argues that while CHAT approaches e.g. Developmental Work Research (DWR) facilitate studies of organisational learning it is also important to find a means for exploring the positioning of individuals within institutions. He offers Bernstein's (2003, p.41) approach to the modelling of pedagogic practice in institutions using the concepts of 'classification' and 'framing'. In Bernstein's approach, 'classification' (C) provides a framework for analysing the relative strength of boundaries between categories such as professional groupings within institutions. In contrast, 'framing' (F) would provide a framework for analyses of the degree to which interactions within institutions are controlled. Classification and framing may be either weaker (C-, F-) or stronger (C+, F+).

Applying this approach to the present study would provide a mechanism for articulating directions of organisational change that would occur as a result of the team's work. Within more traditional models of in-service training framing is stronger (F+) as training providers regulate both what is being taught and how it will be taught. It was envisaged that in the present study framing would weaken (F-) because the team would become more able to operate as a democratic community with higher levels of control over its work and ways of working. It was also envisaged that the notion of 'classification' would apply to the team's position within the local and national communities where opportunities for networking more widely would result in weaker classification (C-). Forms of analysis would aim to chart changes of framing and classification in relation to the aims and outcomes of developmental project work and the implications of this for the team's independence and autonomy, for networking with partners, and for professional identity of the team members.

4.7 OVERVIEW OF CULTURAL APPROACHES TO ANALYSIS

I have described how Engeström (1999) argues that Activity Theory can be viewed as both offering a theoretical framework both to structure developmental activity, and also to study it. He suggests that Developmental Work Research (DWR) (2007) offers a tool to do this. In Chapter 3 I explained that the present study would use an adapted DWR methodology as a framework for interventionist approach to planning and effecting change for educational practice. It would also provide a means for practitioners to bridge the spontaneous, 'on the job' knowing of practitioners and

more theoretical, 'scientific', understandings of joint working for change, with a view to supporting the development of mature understandings informed by them both. I also described how DWR would provide a structured framework for the externalisation of contradictions in work for change in a situated research case study. The analysis of discursive data gathered in the form of audio recordings of team meetings which would be subsequently translated and transcribed would offer insights into team processes of object oriented activity to discursive evidence through the application of 'D' analysis (Middleton, 2010; Daniels, 2010a). The 'objects' that would emerge during the team's work would be revealed in the discursive action of the team, the contradictions that drive them, the strategies – 'tools' - that the team adopt to address them, and the resolutions which may emerge. Bernstein's notions of classification and framing would provide a framework for the description of unfolding shifts in power and control.

4.8 QUANTITATIVE APPROACHES TO ANALYSIS

Elements of quantitative analysis would consider attendance and participation including shifts in participation during the period of the study. It would also explore key themes drawn from discursive evidence to determine the degree to which these were shared by each of the individual team members. Quantitative data would be presented in chart forms appropriate to the data and include pie charts, column charts and line charts.

The present study is based on work which centred on nine team meetings which were held during the academic year from September 2007 to July 2008. Quantitative analysis would be extended to a further meeting held in September 2010 – Meeting 10, in which the team undertook an evaluation of the work undertaken during the study and the outcomes unfolding over time for practice and for team members as practitioners. During this meeting the team also considered its future and emerging team priorities. Discourse during this meeting articulated team perspectives on the impact of the theoretical framework provided by Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) using metaphors associated with growth. These would include opportunities to share perspectives about the team, the contexts within which the team's activity took place, and the constraints which had both challenged and motivated work in object oriented activity.

4.8.1 Quantitative analysis of discursive data

Quantitative analysis of transcripts from team meetings would aim to chart shifts in participation through the analysis of team member contributions in key discussions.

In practice this was achieved through the analysis of excerpts from five meetings which included four of the nine research study meetings and Meeting 10. This analysis focused on excerpts charts in key discussions which took place in Meetings 2, 5, 7, 8 and 10. The excerpts ranged in length from 6 minutes to 14 minutes and were selected through the application of 'D' analysis (Middleton, 2010) described above. Of the 5 'D' analysis strands 'the latter two, 'departure' and 'development' would be viewed as being instrumental in bringing change into being. The five excerpts were chosen because in them the team's discourse included significant levels of contributions coded as 'departure' or 'development' and, therefore, as key turning points the team's work.

4.8.2 Quantitative analysis of excerpts

I have described how each of the five excerpts were chosen because they represented key turning points in the team's work in which key contributions represented 'departures' from previous way of working, perspectives or intentions, and contributed to 'developments' and new ways of working and thinking about the work.

Transcripts of the five excerpts were analysed quantitatively using individual contributions to the discussion, 'turns' as the unit of analysis - where a turn comprises a single utterance made by an individual team member, and where 'turns' could vary in length significantly. A measure of the degree to which the discourse was shared between those present would be quantified as turns/minute calculated by dividing the total number of turns by the number of minutes in each excerpt. Individual participants share would be calculated as a percentage of the total turns in each excerpt.

Shifts in participation over time would be measured using this data by comparing changes in participation over time. The difference between the highest and the lowest percentage of turns would be calculated for each of the excerpts and charted across each of the excerpts to provide an additional measure of how participation was shared at each of the meetings, and over time. As the participation of individual team members would be calculated as a percentage of the total 'turns' in the excerpt this would be represented visually in pie diagrams.

Further analysis would include considerations of the percentage of those present who participated as speakers and the number of participants contributing at least one turn in each excerpt and by extension the number of member who did not contribute

as speakers. Each excerpt would be considered separately in the first instance and then as part of a sequence to determine trends in participation also over time.

4.9 OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY AND ANALYTIC STRANDS

The study would adopt a mixed approach to the analysis of data using an Expansive Learning framework where the development of the team is viewed as change occurring within social, cultural and historical contexts. The framework provided for this draws on Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) where key notions from CHAT provide the headings for the discussions or mediation, subject positions and object oriented activity.

Discursive approaches based on transcript data would offer opportunities for the analysis of narrative themes emerging within discursive action between team members and narrative themes emerging within individual team member interviews. It was envisaged that data from team members' interviews would highlight key perspectives on the value of the work for the team and for them as individuals. Quantitative approaches to the analysis of key conversations would serve to provide a framework within which shifts in participation could be considered and described.

4.9.1 Approaches to analysis

In summary the evidence for the study would be discursive in nature, gathered in dialogues occurring within team meeting or emerging in individual interviews, which were subsequently translated and transcribed. The analysis and discussion would be structured using the conceptual framework provided by Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT). Approaches to discourse analysis would be predominantly qualitative in nature. Analysis of discursive action would be based on approaches outlined by Middleton (2011, 2010). 'D' analysis would be applied to considerations of object oriented activity.

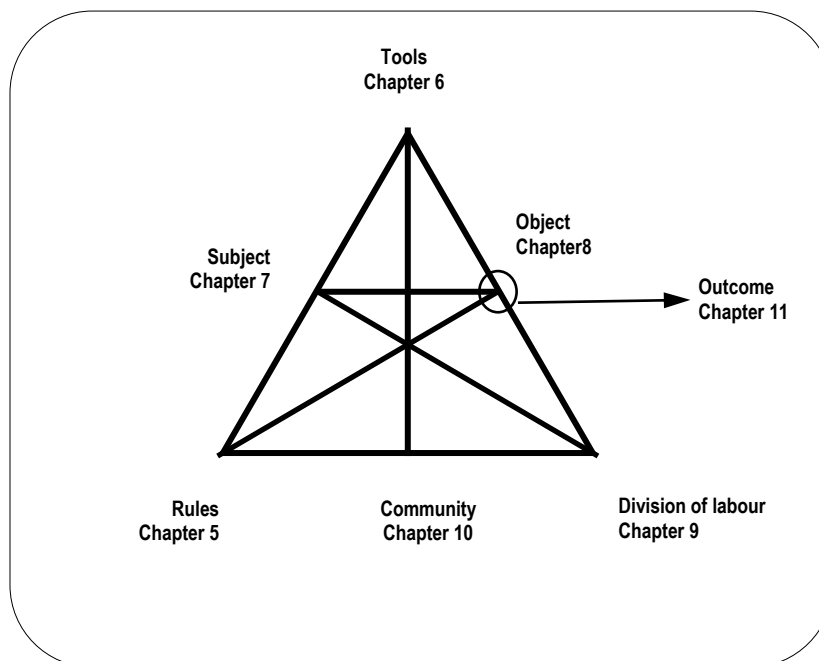
Issues of affect related to identity would emerge in considerations of the narratives of team members and issues relating to the team's activity in community including networking at local, regional and national levels. Work to strengthen a marginal position would draw on the work of Bernstein (2003) relating to positioning, power and control as developed by Daniels (2010a).

Quantitative approaches would aim to quantify shifts in participation through an examination of key excerpts of dialogue using 'turns' as the unit of analysis. In addition, individual team members views expressed in dialogues and narratives

would be analysed for agreement with key themes emerging from qualitative approaches. The degree to which a theme was held in common by team members would be expressed as a proportion of the total membership.

In the chapters that follow my account will report on the outcomes of the analysis described above in relation to the research questions outlined in Chapter 3. My discussion will be structured under headings from the CHAT triangle below.

Figure 4.1: Analysis and discussion



5: THE TEAM AND RULES:

CONSTRAINING AND SUPPORTING CONTEXTS

The Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) model recognises that activity occurs within external contexts which are beyond the control of the subject. These are characterised as ‘rules’ within the CHAT model which may facilitate or constrain the activity.

5.1 COMPLEX CONTEXTS:

WELSH MEDIUM EDUCATION: PRIVILEGED AND MARGINALISED

In Chapter 1 I described how the Welsh language is protected by the Welsh Language Act of 1993 which stipulates that services should be available in Welsh in Wales. This includes a right of access to Welsh-medium education for learners. Information gathered in recent censuses illustrate that nationally the proportion of the population using Welsh as part of the daily life remained generally stable in the latter half of the twentieth century. However, whilst the proportion of pupils receiving their education through the medium of Welsh is relatively small, local authorities report an increasing trend for parents, both Welsh-speaking and non-Welsh-speaking to choose Welsh-medium education for their children.

Despite the strength of national and local commitments to Welsh-medium education practitioners working through the medium of Welsh form a numerical minority. The majority of schools in Wales operate primarily through the medium of English while making provision for learning Welsh as an additional language. In five of the Local Authority’s primary schools the first language for both instructional and administrative purposes is Welsh, while two schools make bilingual provision in parallel Welsh and English streams.

Local authorities throughout Wales operate under Welsh Assembly Government imperatives to make provision for learning through the medium of Welsh, and specific funding streams are in place to meet the growing demand. For instance, the Welsh Assembly Government sets aside significant resources for the commissioning of Welsh-medium learning resources. It is generally understood that without these positive interventions the pace of development of such new resources would be very slow. This is because the potential market for learning materials in Welsh is deemed to be insufficient to generate the research and development necessary to bring resources on stream. Such funding disparities occurring between two communities within such a small nation can give rise to perceptions that disproportionate funds are directed towards Welsh-medium provision. Further tensions may also stem from

misunderstandings. For instance some of the challenges which face Welsh-medium practitioners may not be fully appreciated by monolingual colleagues.

My observations have highlighted that practitioners working through the medium of Welsh experience isolation from schools and colleagues working through the medium of English because of difficulties associated with working within a minority language, even when that language is nominally the national language. Working as the educational psychologist for this team of practitioners raised my awareness of how these marginalising pressures impact on their practice and professional identity. My observations highlighted that working in Welsh within an organisation whose business is primarily conducted in English is challenging because that language appears to develop currency as the authoritative discourse (Bakhtin, 1981).

In discussions team members reported feelings of frustration that traditional approaches to offer support and provide in-service training have failed to bring about intended changes for practice. They recognised that efforts have been well intentioned and courteously presented but feel that monolingual colleagues typically find it difficult to envisage and understand the implications of working within a minority language.

I was involved in an earlier phase of supporting the Welsh-medium schools (as a non-Welsh speaker) and my perception of the group was ... that their expression of the inequity of resources was not helping them to develop their practice'. (Local Authority Principal Educational Psychologist)

Practitioners experience this as a form of marginalisation.

'...in our own land we have become marginalised'. (SENCo1)

Moreover, even bilingual colleagues with overarching responsibilities within the local authority may make pragmatic decisions which prioritise the needs of the majority, those working through the medium of English. This pragmatism is less likely to reflect a lack of will to effect change for practitioners working through Welsh but rather to be a response to managing competing pressures. In addition, the difficulties facing Welsh-medium practitioners may appear to be intractable given the operational constraints of the local authority. Members of the team acknowledge the pragmatic difficulties faced by Local Authority officers but experience this as a lack of support.

'...what we need is a structure from the local authority, because we don't have time - well I haven't anyway. I teach children don't I? That's my opinion'. (SENCo1)

An example from local practice may provide a useful illustration of how this may occur. The local authority requires that schools provide standardised assessments in

literacy for all pupils at key points in their school life. Until 2007 all pupils were assessed using an assessment scale developed in Wales and available in both English and Welsh. Over time, it became clear that because of the limitations of this scale, better alternatives were available for use for assessing the literacy levels of learners' reading in English. Accordingly, arrangements were made to replace the original bilingual scale with another for that purpose. However, because there was no alternative, the original scale remained in use to provide standardised information about the literacy levels of pupils who are learning through the medium of Welsh. Team members accepted the new arrangement, recognising that the local authority had little choice in the matter, but expressed frustration about the paucity of effective standard measures of assessment for use in the Welsh.

'...the resources available aren't any good. How can our children learn?' (SNT1)

It is widely accepted that practitioners in the Welsh sector experience specific challenges making provision for learners. It is also acknowledged that the difficulties are exacerbated when making provision for learners with additional needs. Challenges may ensue from the following:

- teaching resources in Welsh are scarce and may be expensive;
- support from professionals may not be available in the language in which they work;
- assessment resources are typically not standardised for populations of learners learning through the medium of Welsh; and
- the dominance of the English language in the social interactions in Wales means that the business of the local authority tends to be conducted in English even where arrangements for translation are in place.

Difficulties relating to resourcing are recognised at a national level as is shown in the following quote from a national partner:

'There is always a shortage of Welsh-medium resources for learners with additional learning needs – particularly reading materials and teachers often find it hard to provide sufficient materials on the finely graded steps needed by learners.' (Officer for Commissioning, Welsh Assembly Government)

The potential of the team's work in this respect was recognised by regional partners:

'A challenge for all adults working with children with additional learning needs in Welsh-medium schools is to provide pupils with inspiring and motivational resources that are as appealing as those available in English.' (Learning Development Teacher, Regional Partner)

Team members' comments highlight the impact of these difficulties for practice. I have described how the team became active under the auspices of the local authority

as practitioners with responsibility for special educational needs. The team were motivated to develop resources to meet the needs of all learners but were particularly keen to address those of learners with additional needs whom they considered to be particularly disadvantaged. Early team perceptions characterised these challenges as barriers to practice and as problems that others should address.

'...we shouldn't have to work like this. Someone should do something about it'. (SENCo5)

The present study charts the team's work together following a shift in which these challenges were re-characterised as imperatives which motivated the team to address them.

'So obviously there was a huge need, sense of urgency to work together to produce practical things that would help the staff involved and in so doing help all the children that we all are trying to help'. (SNT1)

I have reported how the Welsh language is a minority language, not only in relation to the population of the United Kingdom, but also within Wales. One result of this is that local authorities in many parts of Wales experience great difficulty recruiting professionals able to offer services through the medium of Welsh. Nevertheless, the Welsh language is the language in which many conduct both their professional and their personal lives. Providing effective services in Welsh is therefore, a matter of equality as well as one of statutory responsibility.

'The language is important, the Welsh language that is why we began because of the difficulties. It's our mother tongue, it underpins everything, is it part of who we are, our identity'. (SENCo1)

Practitioners faced with constructing interpretive narratives in English with which to describe their experience and practice to non-Welsh speakers feel marginalised because of this. Team members are fluent English speakers and equal to the task. However, their reports highlights ways in which this places an additional burden on them and express a sense of 'relief' when able to access consultations through Welsh.

'I think that it is having an educational psychologist who speaks Welsh that has added to this, even though we had brilliant support from educational psychologists (before), but the has given us more 'value added'. We feel that, at least we can, as the English (schools) do, have someone communicating in our own language'. (SENCo1)

Welsh-medium practitioners' accounts flag up the benefits of being able to engage with other practitioners in Welsh, as expressed by a regional partner:

'I regard as professional development any opportunity to discuss and share good practice through the medium of Welsh with partners from other regions'. (Learning Development Teacher, Regional Partner)

5.1.1 Historical contexts – 2006/7

The present project emerged from an earlier project jointly co-ordinated by the local authority's educational psychologist service and the learning support team. The stated aim of that project was to review and develop strategies of support for Welsh-medium practitioners. Local authority officers recognised that the schools face particular challenges, for instance that the Welsh-medium schools are generally geographically isolated from one another and had historically served separate and distinct communities within the authority e.g. mining villages, rural villages and town centre locations. Each community has historically had its own distinct cultural identity, and in the past this may have tended to raise barriers between the schools.

'I was involved in an earlier phase of supporting the Welsh-medium Schools (as a non-Welsh speaker) and my perception of the group was that relationships needed developing'. (Local Authority Principal Educational Psychologist)

The earlier project's leaders had identified strengthening links between the schools as a priority. It was hoped that this would provide opportunities for peer support by providing a context for the development of links between settings, for sharing aspects of good practice, and as a forum for mutual support. At that stage the content of meetings was determined by local authority officers based on their assessments of the training needs and interests of the team. It had been hoped that this work would bring about the desired changes.

'Although we have brought Welsh-medium SENCos together before, we have not been clear about the outcome'. (Local Authority Inclusion Officer)

The practice of building the capacity of professionals by the (team's) approach has been a strand in previous local authority projects. However, (the team) has taken this to another level in terms of outcome'. (Local Authority Principal Educational Psychologist)

On becoming involved with the project in 2006 I came to view that previous approaches had tended to position school practitioners as consumers of the project and had provided few opportunities for them to engage actively in planning and decision making about future directions. As a new member of the team I was present during the meeting in which the initial 'departure' occurred. Circumstances external to the group, but relating to the practice of one team member, led her to propose that the team undertake a developmental project to address an aspect of practice. This proposal was accepted by the team as a whole with the support of key local authority officers.

However, I observed that engaging in developmental project working did not immediately reduce the frustrations experienced by the team and discussions about the burden caused by inequalities were a feature of early meetings. A view that

reducing barriers to their practice was a task for others persisted. For example comments from early in the study identify their difficulties as problems for others to solve.

'What we need is a structure from the local authority'. (SENCo1)

In contrast, discourse from later meetings and practitioner reviews of the team's work provide indications of how their perceptions of their own potential to act changed over the course of the work. This includes recognising how things used to be, and how they had changed as a result of the work as is shown by the following team member comments.

'...you know how we used to be the 'whinging group?'' (SENCo1)

'I couldn't think outside the box because I just felt I was a full time teacher and I didn't want to take on any major project outside that' (SNT1)

Such comments also reflect new perspectives of independence, a sense of purpose and of feeling equal to the tasks they undertake.

'In the beginning I have to admit that I used to think where are we going with this? But now I can see its worth and, I must say, I really do enjoy it'. (SENCo5)

'We are not looking for people to do it for us. We want to work together to make things happen, we feel like people who can make a contribution, and people with a voice, and people who can be responsible for what is needed for the children in our schools'. (SENCo1)

Such changes are not only apparent within the team but also recognised by managers, local authority officers, and regional and national partners.

'The group has led to an improvement in the provision for Welsh language pupils with literacy difficulties, which has facilitated a greater co-operation between schools and the sharing of good practice. (Headteacher4)

'They have looked at what they do and what resources they produce and their practice, and can share that back to school rather than just taking something from the local authority centrally and running with it. It has provided a really good model of how you can bring people together and have really sound outcomes as a result of it, working with an educational psychologist in partnership rather than as an expert working at a distance from them'. (Local Authority Inclusion Officer)

The team has created co-working and mutual support where this was unlikely to happen before because of geographical constraints. (Local Authority Senior Educational Psychologist)

'I have met several members of the team and have been impressed by their dedication and commitment to improving practice/resources for learners with additional learning needs – they are clearly passionate about their work'. (Officer for Commissioning, Welsh Assembly Government)

A detailed consideration of the impact of the team's work within the communities in which they participate, including team perspectives and those of partners can be found in Chapter 10.

6: TEAMWORKING AND MEDIATION

Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) (Engeström, 1999) offers a theoretical framework which both structures developmental activity, and provides a means with which to study the processes – tools - that mediate change. In this chapter I discuss the multiple mediational means which supported the team's object oriented activity. The case study focuses on work undertaken in team meetings and its outcomes. In the planning stages of the case study it became clear that termly meetings would not generate the momentum necessary to bring about change and that additional funding would be necessary to support more frequent meetings. These would be held at broadly monthly intervals through an academic year.

6.1 TEAM MEETINGS – A TOOL FOR WORKING AND LEARNING TOGETHER

With the consent of the team members the case study aimed to explore the processes that supported team working and team learning in work to bring about change for practice and also for practitioners. Obtaining the consent of the whole team for the research which would involve more frequent team meetings than in the past was an essential first step to the work. Our relationships as partners in the team and the mutual trust which had built up prior to the study were such that team members were keen to help. In addition, the experience of establishing the team and developing new ways of working were generally held to have been of value.

'We have created this forum. We have had time to develop this group in a way it doesn't matter what the outcome is, the forum is the important thing. The forum underpins everything'. (SENCo1)

Because of this the prospect of being able to meet more frequently was perceived as a benefit which would enable the pace of the team's work to increase. Indeed some team members described how initiating the research brought about transformations for the team and had become a tool for engaging with emerging objects e.g. regional and national networking.

'I was challenged, inspired to carry on because someone outside of what we were, I'm not saying above or whatever, but someone new coming in. I think that that made a difference ... it was the tool we used, we used you, it sounds awful but we did use you a lot to start off with because we were rather dependent in the beginning'. (SENCo1)

.So we had (the research), your guidance and the time created by these monthly meetings. You were there laying all this groundwork and that was just facilitating everything, it just made it all quite an easy process because everything fell into place and we fell into a routine, and that enabled everything to develop quite nicely'. (SNT1)

Prior to the case study the team had met once each term with the necessary funding being provided by the local authority. Having agreed to increase the frequency of

meetings the team's attention turned to obtaining the necessary funding to release its members to attend meetings.

As a first step the team approached the local authority for increased levels of funding, but this was unsuccessful as were early overtures to the officers from the Welsh Assembly Government. The team were encouraged by local authority officers to apply to the General Teaching Council (Wales) which offered a potential source of necessary funds. As this funding was available for teachers only, the study was founded and dependent on the willingness of team members to undertake the administrative and reporting roles which formed part of the team's accountability to that body. The value of this departure was recognised by local authority officers.

'In taking ownership of a perceived issue, they have come together extremely well as a group and have produced a set of excellent resource material'. (Chief Officer for Learning and Achievement)

A series of 9 monthly meetings were planned for the academic year 2007/8. The team were successful in the bid for funding, but as the funding body operated within a financial year framework only those meetings within that financial year were funded in the first instance. This left a shortfall in funding for two meetings scheduled for the summer term. Notwithstanding this uncertainty the team agreed to begin the work and formed the intention to seek alternative funding to meet the shortfall in due course.

The application for funding provides an example of where team members undertook new ways of working with the support of one another, they had gained the confidence to step outside of their 'comfort zone'.

'I just felt I was a full time teacher and I didn't want to take on any major project, but I was quite happy to be guided by you and work with the team. I needed the team and your leadership skills, and your motivation and everything as well'. (SNT1)

Team members also reported on how increasing the frequency of the meeting facilitated this process.

'I think that the frequency of meetings has helped us just to get to know each other better, so whereas initially there was this wariness while you are sussing everybody out. Now, we are all so comfortable and confident with each other that we can say anything and that is great, absolutely great, nobody holds back. If someone wants to be critical they are critical and that is it, you just take it and it is fine'. (SNT1)

Members also expressed a sense that the team's confidence emerged and grew as a result of working together.

'I think that when we were starting out we used to wonder, how are we going to work and what are we going to work at but together, I think, many heads are better than one

and from that we have been able to do the work. We have decided on the work, what will be appropriate for the schools and how other schools might be able to use them, and then we have built on that with everybody each having their own ideas'. (SENCo2)

6.1.1 Dual stimulation and change laboratory:

a tool to support change for practitioners doing developmental project work

The team agreed to work together using structures for working together based on Engeström's change laboratory which was outlined in detail in Chapter 3. The Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) triangle was introduced during Meeting 1 in a presentation which unpacked the CHAT terms and applied them to a description of earlier work and its outcomes. This account highlighted the distinction between the overall outcomes of project working, and the work which engenders those outcomes - the objects. In addition, an account of the stages in the team's development was presented in a series of diagrams.

As described in Chapter 3 the Change Laboratory approach provided a structure for object orientated activity to bring about change for practice and for provision. Early objects included work to develop the team as a forum, and work to formulate key vocabulary for a resource to support oracy development. Questions of funding presented a significant challenge to the team and to the research and emerging objects oriented activity included work to resolve these issues.

Team member comments revealed their sense that the structure of the meetings had facilitated progress towards the objects.

'There has to be some structure, it is an informal structure but we do need to stay on track'. (SNT1)

Team members described how the change laboratory set up presented information in ways that were visual and provided multisensory information which mediated joint work. For instance, the role of the flip chart data evolved during the course of the team's work. Practitioner reflections emphasise the key role of the data that was gathered and its purpose.

'The flip chart is there for you to refer to while we are talking and you can always refer back to things. Otherwise it can be so abstract, when it is just oral/aural, it sort of makes things more concrete'. (SNT1)

The flip chart provided a tool for engaging in shared thinking.

'Our ideas were evolving in front of our eyes – it was a working document that reflected the development of shared ideas, it allowed us to work together, was a visual focus and a visual record that was available to all the group'. (SENCo1)

As the team member confidence grew, and as the working model became internalised, the role of the scribe became more likely to be distributed among the group:

'There was shared ownership of this recording process, it was definitely not like someone was writing minutes. Everyone contributed and, towards the end, people would just get up and pick up a pen to show what they were thinking and change things or add things.' (SENCo1)

Team meetings proceedings noted on the flip chart provided visual information available for the whole team and open to review and amendment prior to agreement as a fair record of the discussion.

Data was gathered cumulatively over the course of the work in presentations that were prepared for each meeting. These included meeting agendas, copies of correspondence received, charts and tables. This growing bank of information was available for reference at all times e.g. for clarification of decision making for charting processes of change and for highlighting work in progress throughout the series of meetings. One team member suggested that the format provided additional validation to group processes.

'The PowerPoint is how these things are done these days, and again it is a focus'. (SNT1)

The agenda became more than a list of items to be considered or discussed but a tool to focus shared attention and as an aid for reviewing progress.

'There was a progression (to the meetings), and that is important. When I look back at where we were when we started and where we are going to now, there is such a difference'. (SENCo5)

'The agenda was the key to reflection and planning'. (SENCo1)

One practitioner likened it to processes she used in her practice.

'It is like the Lesson Objective isn't it? We arrive and know that we are going to this and this and this, and that helps us to meet targets, it is good for us to see'. (SENCo5)

Contributions during each meeting established points for the agendas of future meetings. It also set up tasks to be undertaken between meetings and individual as well as team responsibilities.

'Meetings were planned from one meeting to the next, the agenda was always clear. It helped to focus attention on next steps. It helped us to clarify the jobs to be done'. (SENCo1)

Over time the information gathered in the presentations grew and became increasingly valuable as a tool for reviewing and monitoring progress as a bank of information which charted the progress of the team's work.

'We could use (it) to check things, it streamlined the process. Without it we would have wasted time'. (SENCo3)

Team member reflections suggest that over time our use of tools became automatic and the mediation they provided became less visible.

'It became part of the process and we tended to take it for granted – we were so aware that it was there. As we went on we arrived at a place where we were clear about processes, the framework was in place, and it was accepted'. (SENCo1).

The CHAT model was available for reference in every meeting and provided a tool for reviewing the work that led up to the case study. It was also a tool for reviewing trajectories of change including how earlier objects were transformed and became tools for later work. Colleagues reflected on how the team - the subject of activity - developed and how team members were the subject in other activity triangles in their practice within a range of professional contexts.

'It is as if we come to the meeting and talk and then we go to school and talk, and in a way it is as if we go full circle because we are the subject (of the work) everywhere'. (SENCo2)

A regional partner reported that she viewed her participation in team meetings as contributing to her own professional development. The study was also viewed as having implications for constructions of professional and personal identity.

'I don't know how much of the object is, how much it is about national identity but personal identity. How much of this is for us too, as adults teaching through the medium of Welsh. It is helping us to have someone like ourselves. So maybe it is a professional forum but maybe it is a forum for personal development too'. (SENCo1)

6.2 LANGUAGE: A CULTURAL TOOL FOR DISTRIBUTED LEARNING

6.2.1 The Team and discursive action

Evidence gathered in interviews with team members highlighted the important role of discussion as a tool for getting things done – discursive action where working as a team enabled progress towards objects in ways which would not have been possible individuals. Team members' comments emphasised the distributed, discursive nature of the team's work.

'...being together, (sharing) our ideas, talking, having people to talk to us, networking, doing things practically, discussing ...' (SENCo3)

'That is where the talking comes in isn't it? And that is where more heads are better than one head because everyone can work together and put their ideas in'. (SENCo2)

'In a way we are the engine that has brought it together, able to discuss things among ourselves and work together'. (SNT2)

Team members expressed how becoming comfortable with one another had facilitated the sharing of ideas, and that the willingness to disagree facilitated progress in the team's work.

'We have become a lot more confident with each other. We knew each other before but it's a lot better now, (and) because of that the ideas come more easily and we are not too afraid to say what we mean'. (SENCo2)

'As we work as a small group everyone knows each other and we have gelled as a group, the ideas all come from the group, it isn't as if there is one of us who has taken over. We are all in it and everyone is supportive'. (SENCo3)

I have described how discursive data from audio recordings was gathered for analysis qualitatively using discourse analysis where researcher interpretations included ongoing consultation with team members to ensure that the analysis reflected their intended meanings. Audio evidence was also analysed quantitatively with a view to substantiating facts emerging from qualitative analysis of the narrative accounts of team members and team meeting discourses. It is to this that I now turn.

6.3 QUANTITATIVE APPROACHES TO ANALYSIS

The present study which included 9 meetings held during the research period, and a review meeting held as my direct involvement with the team ceased two years later. Records of attendance highlight the commitment of the majority of the team to the work, and to regular attendance at team meetings. This information is documented in Table 6.1 below. Records of attendance provide information with which to chart changes to the membership of the team that occurred during the research period as members left or took leave and as new members joined or rejoined the team.

The data highlights that whilst 11 team members participated in meetings during the period of the case study research the team experienced some inevitable changes in membership. For instance SENCo 3 took a leave of absence from work after Meeting 8; SENCo 7 transferred into the English Sector after Meeting 7 and was replaced by SENCo 8 by Meeting 9.

Figure 6.1: Attendance of individual team members

2007/ 2008	SENCo1	SENCo2	SENCo3	SENCo4	SENCo5	SENCo7	SENCo8	SENCo9	SNT 1	SNT 2	EP
Meeting 1 Oct 2007	x	x	x	x		x		x	x		x
Meeting 2 Nov 2007	x	x	x	x	x	x		x (left)	x		x
Meeting 3 Dec 2007	x	x	x	x	x	x			x		x
Meeting 4 Jan 2008	x	x	x	x	x	x			x		x
Meeting 5 Feb 2008	x	x	x			x			x		x
Meeting 6 April 2008	x	x	x	x	x	x			x		x
Meeting 7 May 2008	x	x	x	x	x	x (left)			x		x
Meeting 8 June 2008	x	x	x (leave)	x	x				x		x
Meeting 9 July 2008	x	x		x			x (new)		x	x (new)	x
Meeting Sept 2010	x	x		x	x			x (rejoined)	x	x	x
Attended	100%	100%	80%	90%	70%	70%	10%	30%	100%	20%	100 %

The table also shows that while one member had disagreed with the team's priorities at the outset which she felt were not relevant to her practice, her place in the team was maintained and that she had chosen to rejoin the team at a later stage. The table also highlights that 8 of the 11 were present for more than 7 of the 10 meetings considered in the present study.

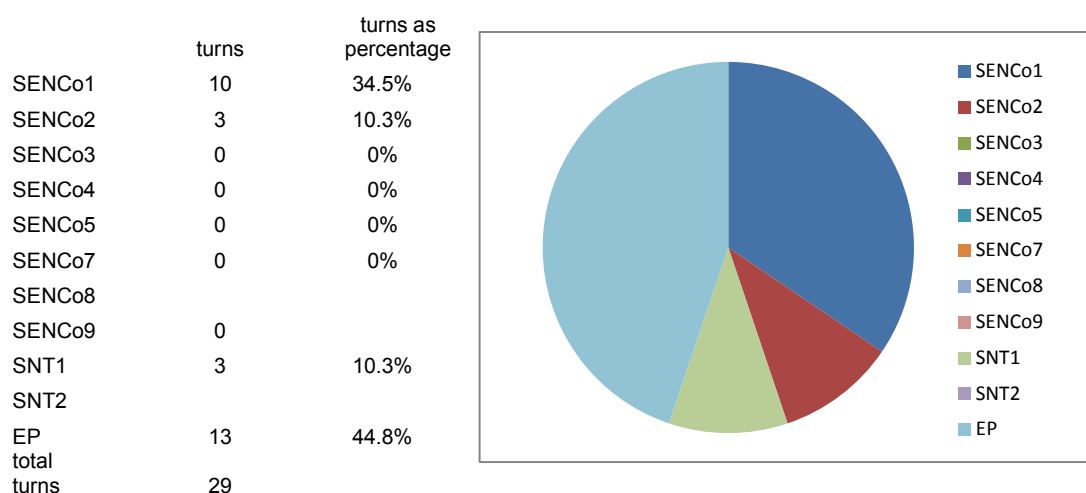
Quantitative analysis of transcripts from team meetings provides evidence which charts shifts in participation in team dialogues. The analysis considers team member contributions in key discussions in 4 of the 9 meetings and in the final review meeting, Meeting 10. The data charts the participation of the team members in excerpts from Meetings 2, 5, 7, 8 and 10. These excerpts were selected using the precepts of 'D' Analysis (Middleton, 2010) using the 5 'D' analysis strands and are judged to be key events in the team's work and pivotal points within the study.

6.3.1 Analysis of excerpts

Five excerpts were chosen which represented significant turning points in the team's work. In these excerpts utterances included 'departures' from previous way of working which contributed to 'developments' and new ways of working and thinking about the work. Transcripts of these excerpts were analysed using 'turns' as the unit of analysis. Participation in the discussion was quantified in terms of contributions to the discussion - 'turns' and calculated as a percentage of the total number of 'turns' in the excerpt. This data is visually represented in pie diagrams. Further analysis considered the percentage of those present who participated as speakers and the average number of turns/ minute in each excerpt.

Chart 6.1: Meeting 2 - Planning priorities for resources and networking

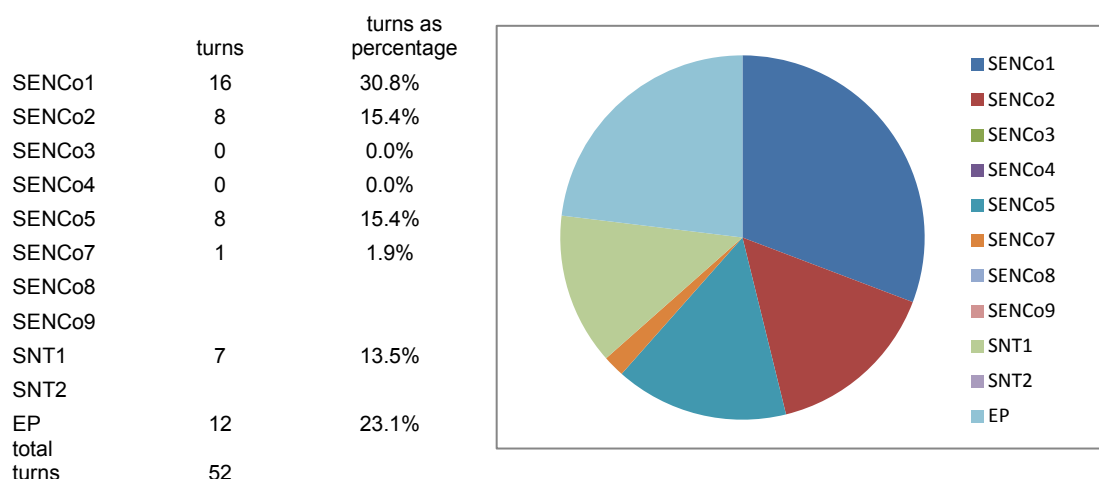
(6 minutes) Total turns = 29 Average turns / minute = 4.83



9 members of the team were present during the discussion but only 4 participated as speakers. Participation ranged from 0.0% – 44.8%= 44.8 percentage point

Chart 6.2: Meeting 5 - Considering priorities for next steps funding/ resources /networking following advice from Welsh Assembly Government officer

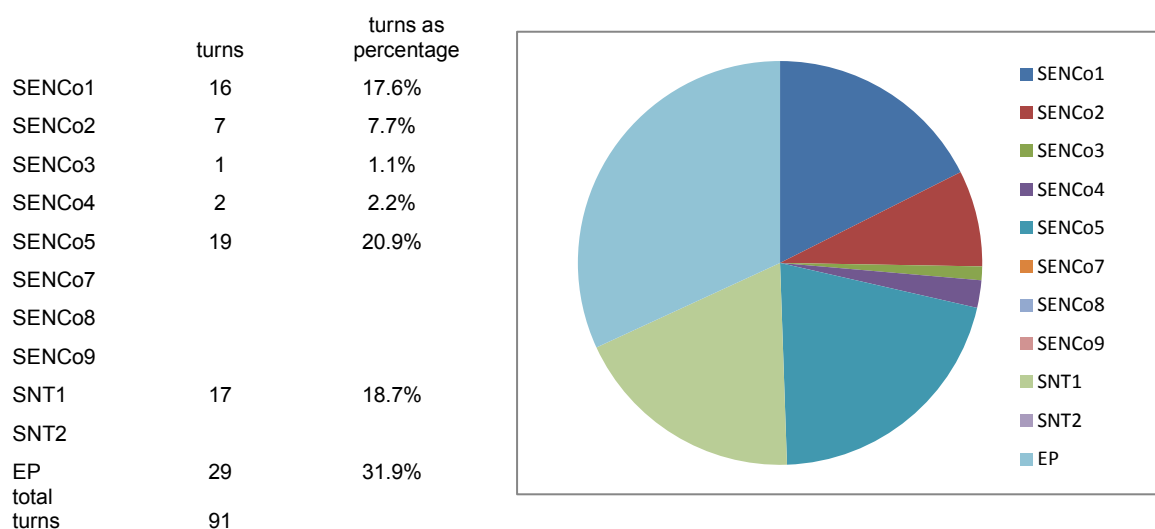
(9 minutes) Total turns = 52 Average turns / minute were 5.78



8 members of the team were present during this discussion and 6 participated. Participation ranged from 0.0% – 30.8 = 30.8 percentage points.

Chart 6.3: Meeting 7 - Reviewing initial prints of initial 12 books

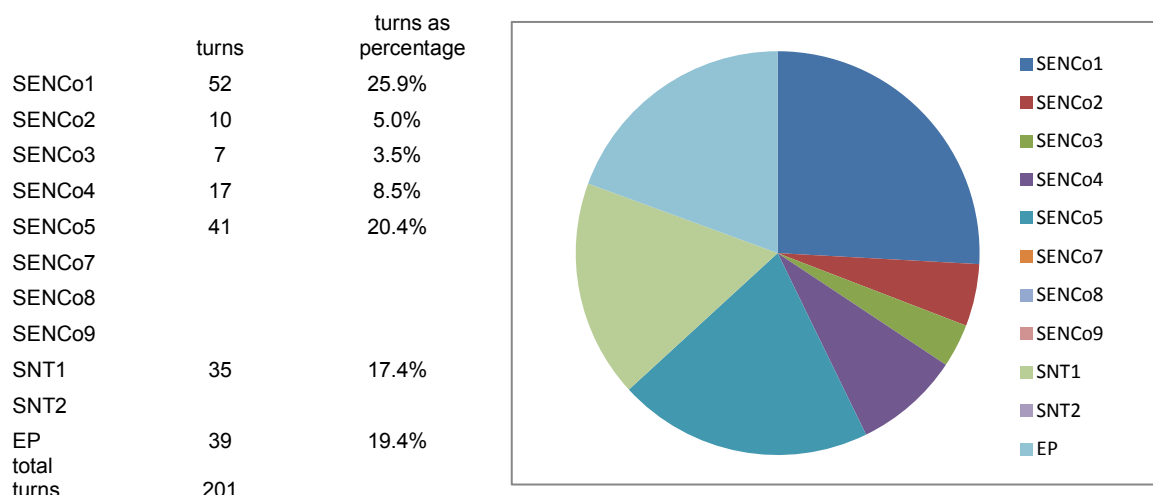
(8 minutes) Total turns = 9 Average numbers of turns / minute was 11.37



7 members of the team were present for this discussion where all members contributed at least once and participation ranged from 1.1% – 31.9% = 30.8 percentage points.

Chart 6.4: Meeting 8 - Planning animations for joint work with National Grid for Learning (Wales)

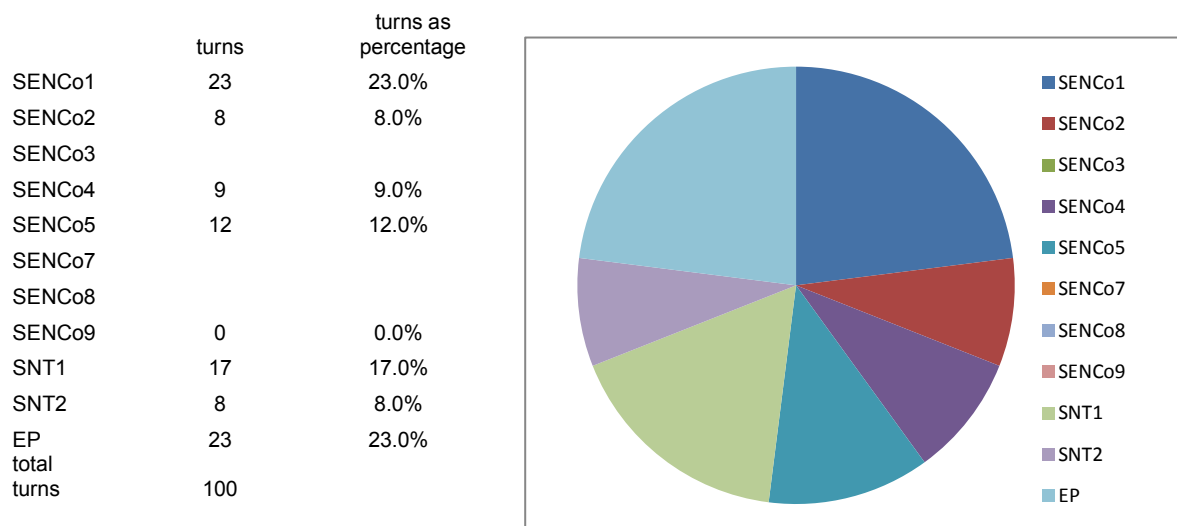
(14 minutes) Total turns = 201 Average turns / minute = 28.71



7 members of the team were present for this discussion where all members contributed as speakers. Participation ranged from 3.5% – 25.9% = 22.4 percentage points.

Chart 6.5: Meeting 10 - September 2010 – Reviewing the team’s work

(10 minutes) Total turns =100 Turns/ minute = 10



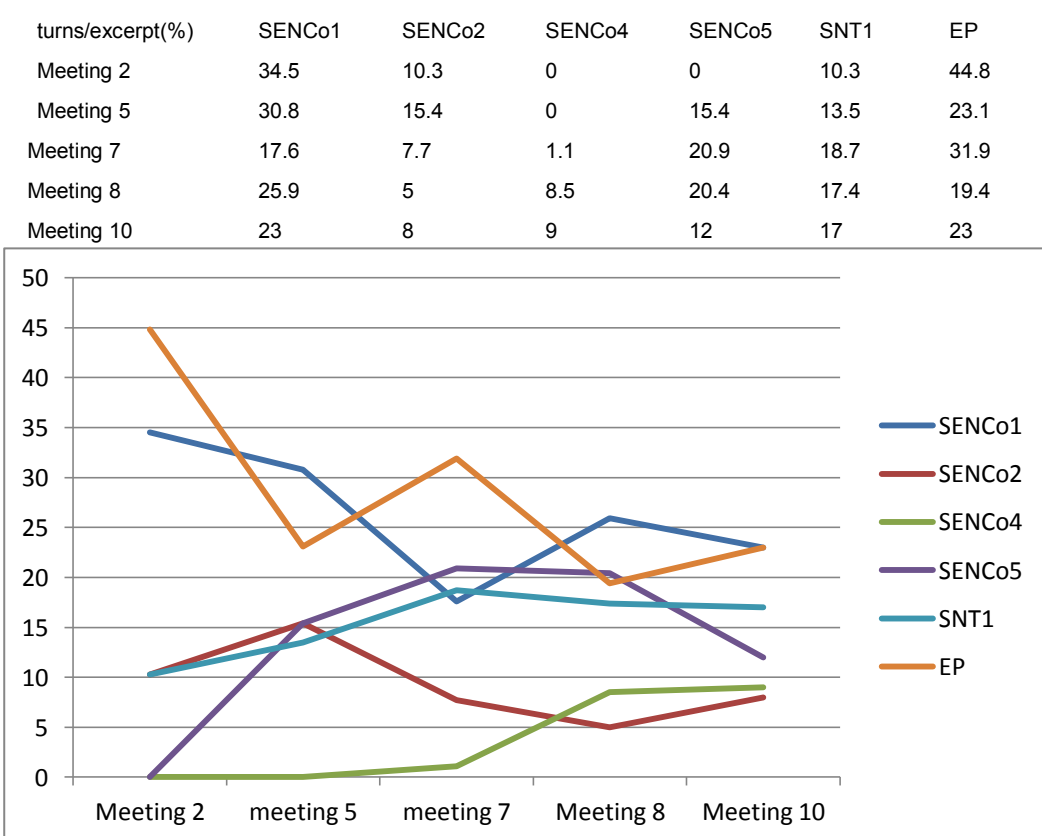
Here 7 of 8 members participated. However, SENCo 9 rejoined the team after having left following Meeting 2. As the excerpt included a discussion which reviewed the work of the team during her absence from team meetings she was unable to

contribute. Excluding SENC9, in this excerpt participation by speaker ranged from 8% – 23% = 15 percentage points

6.3.2 Overview of trends in participation in key discussions

Taken as a whole this data highlights shifts in participation in meetings over time which is represented in Chart 6.8.1 This shows how earlier meetings tended to be dominated by a few members of the team where some team members did not participate as speakers at all. In later meetings the participation of members who had tended to be silent increased and the number of ‘turns’ became less unevenly distributed between those attending the meetings.

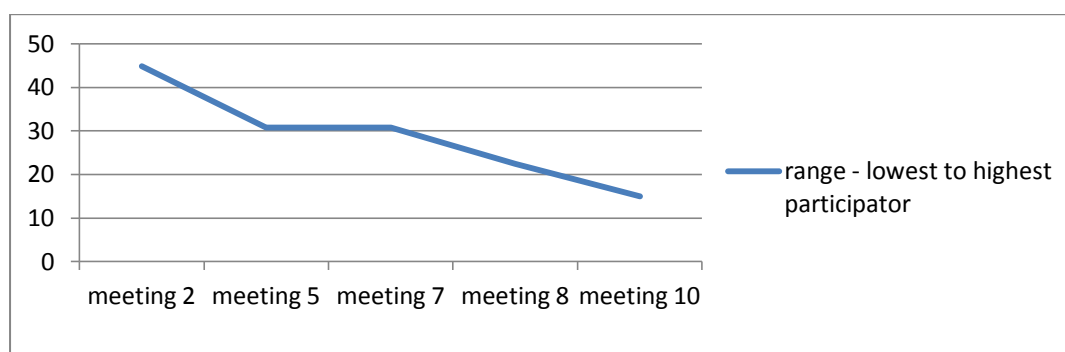
Chart 6.6 Team member turns as a percentage of the total number of turns



Analysis of the difference between the participation of the member who contributed least and the team member who contributed most diminished as time went on as can be seen in Chart 6.7 below.

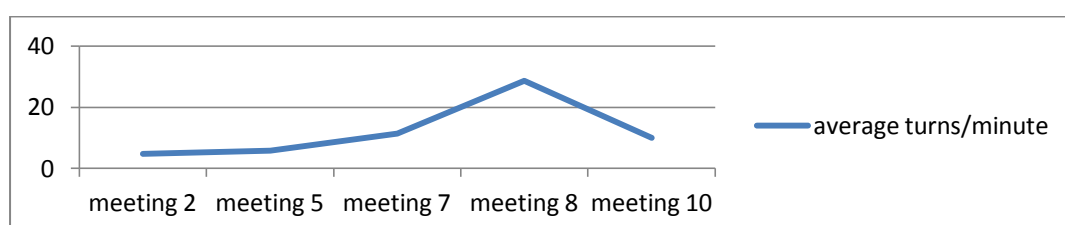
Chart 6.7

Difference between the lowest - highest participator (percentage points)



Another trend emerging from the quantitative analysis of the data highlights that over time the average number of turns / minute increased overtime, peaking in the excerpt from Meeting 8 where the discussion centred on how to animate a reading text for presentation on the internet. In this discussion the team were under significant pressure to make a number of decisions about how to animate a structured reading text in joint work with one of our national partners – The National Grid for Learning (Wales) within a short space of time. In this excerpt the discourse was briskly paced reflecting the need to consider a large number of practical questions and possibilities under pressure. Because of this it may be viewed as an exception to the general trend.

Chart 6.8 Average turns / minute by excerpt



Taken as a whole this data highlights how the discourse became more evenly distributed between team members over the course of the case study. Data for the average number of turns/minute increases from under 5/minute in the excerpt from Meeting 2 to more than 10/minute in excerpts from meetings 8 and 10.

This analysis charts shifts in participation over time in these excerpts where the evidence suggests that levels of participation increased over time as more of those

present participated as speakers. Such trends suggest that in general levels of confidence and willingness to contribute to the team's work were enhanced over the course of the study. Such changes are likely to reflect collective and individual changes at the subject position in the CHAT model. Qualitative analysis of the contributions of team members provides additional evidence to support this interpretation and in the next chapter I present an account of the analysis of shifts within the subject position over the course of the case study.

7: THE TEAM AND TEAM MEMBERS: SUBJECT POSITIONS

The present study explores how a team of practitioners work and learn together during a period of change. In previous chapters I have described how the team had come into existence under the auspices of the local authority who had been keen support its development in anticipation that the team would become an independent, mutually supporting group of practitioners. Opportunities for discussion and for training determined by officers based on their assessments of the team's needs had not resulted in the desired changes.

The case study charts the team's work and trajectories of development in which the nature of the team's work shifted from receiving input determined, produced and delivered by others, to self identified developmental project work based on priorities identified in practice. New approaches to team working initially proposed by team member, SENCo1, were agreed by other members of the team. This proposal received the support of local authority officers who agreed to fund termly meetings. Team meetings would take the form of shared developmental project work to support change for practice. At this time the local authority also supported the expansion of the team to include practitioners working in the authority's two bilingual schools which had hitherto been excluded from the project.

In this chapter I present an account of the evidence relating to the team's work and its implications for change for team members collectively and individually, within the 'subject' position of the CHAT model.

7.1 CHAT CONCEPTS OF 'SUBJECT':

BOUNDARY CROSSING AND RULE BREAKING

I joined the team as this shift was taking place and observed the discussion in which new ways of working were proposed and agreed. In essence, in broaching her initial idea for a team project SENCo1 had broken unspoken rules which took for granted that provision would be made to the team as opposed to being determined by the team. The flexibility of local authority officers' response to the proposal and their willingness to support this departure was an essential part of the team's development at this time.

The study's research questions focus on how developmental project work provides a vehicle for supporting change for practitioners, both through professional development and also through strengthening a marginal position. In this chapter I will

describe how team member perspectives developed over the course of the work, including changes to their understandings of their role, their capacity to bring about changes through new ways of working, and the possibilities for action available to them. My discussion will centre on the interplay between affective issues and development in general drawing on González-Rey's (2009, p.69) interpretations of Vygotsky's accounts of the ways in which cognitive and affective elements are integrated in psychological development. Vygotsky argues that emotional responses are inherent in all activity including those oriented towards learning and development, and that they are as important as intellectual meanings, understandings and representations in change processes.

7.1.1 Change and practice

The study focused on the team and the team's work during a period of change and my thesis offers an account of the transformations that occurred after the team ceased to be recipients of provision made by others. Instead they undertook self directed developmental work acting in community with a widening network of practitioners. Perspectives founded on feelings of powerlessness had been expressed in the team's early discussions, and tentative suggestions for activity to bring about change caused disquiet including fears of overreaching the remit and expertise of the team.

'Sometimes I do think that we are being a bit too ambitious about some things, maybe we can do it. I don't know if it will work'. (SENC04)

Doubts about whether the team could and should undertake work such as the creation of resources were held in tension with notions that without action nothing would change.

'And years go by and very little happens, and what does is just by chance or by luck, but this it is a fact, it is a fact and we are doing it, and we are doing it in our schools'. (SENC04).

The team's experience and position as working teachers informed collectively held views about resources to meet the needs of learners.

'What I think is really good about this is that here it is the people who are experiencing the situation, people who are working in schools and with children who are doing it, not some people who are working in an office, it's not some government initiative. It is the people working in the field that are working together to create something and it will be great if something comes out of it' (SENC07)

Nevertheless, even within the team, members expressed reticence when proposing any activity which could be viewed as lying outside their remit and which might be

judged to be presumptuous. As a result proposals tended to be made hesitantly and rather apologetically.

‘...and so I thought if I could do that, but it feels impossible, I don’t know enough...’
(SENC01)

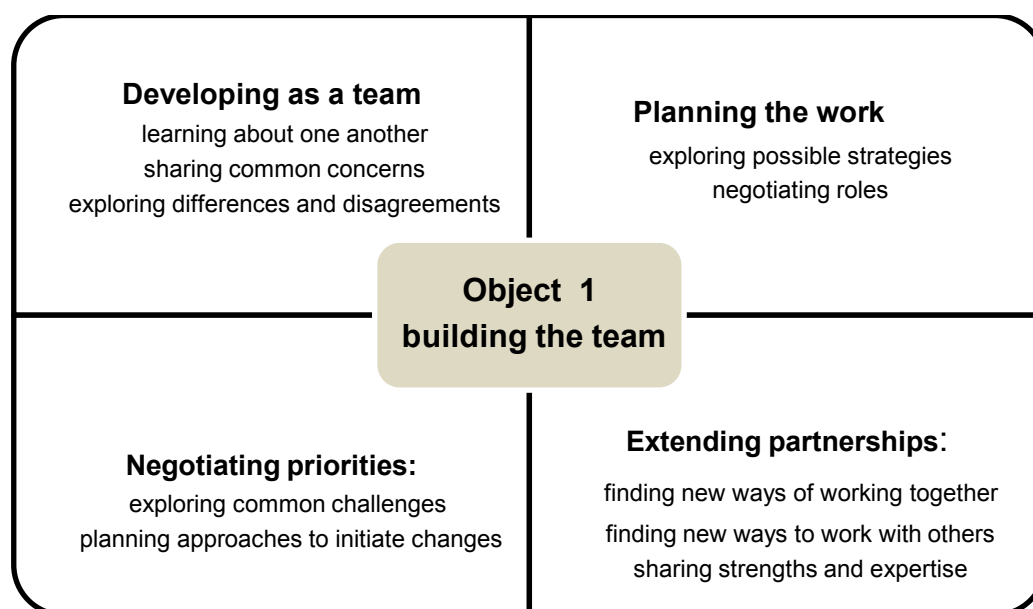
Characteristically such proposals tended to be made by more confident team members. Even so ideas emerged tentatively, for consideration and development in dialogue with the team as a whole. Analysing the elaboration of these embryonic notions as they were expressed in team discussions required an approach to discourse analysis which supported considerations of how talk is used to do work. Middleton’s (2010) notion of ‘D’ analysis described in Chapter 2 provided a lens through which to view significant turning points for changes for the team and for individual team members using the strands of ‘D’ analysis.

I have described how, of the five ‘D’s, ‘departure’ moments which are viewed as springboards for significant change lead to ‘development’ in object oriented activity. During the course of the study I observed that while ‘departure’ moments for any object of activity would generally stem from individuals, it was the way in which they were received by the team and explored, developed and incorporated into subsequent team activity which would determine whether the 5th ‘D’ – ‘development’ would take place.

7.1.2 ‘Departure’ contributions in object oriented activity

In the section that follows I offer an example of ‘departure’ contribution to the team’s discourse which took place in activity oriented to the initial object of the team’s activity - ‘Object 1: building the team’. I provide an extended transcript of an excerpt from Meeting 1 to illustrate how a significant change came about through a series of contributions which were tangential to the planned discourse. The exchange emerged during a review of the team’s work up to that point. A researcher dominated presentation had included an introduction to the CHAT model and the notion of ‘object’ given an illustration of the model using an example of the team’s own work in building a forum for change. The object under consideration, ‘Object1: Building the Team’ was viewed, at that time, as being composed of four interconnected strands each with its own sub-strands. This is represented in the diagram below (Figure 7.1)

Figure 7.1 Object 1: building the team



The excerpt cited below provides an example of how object oriented activity in the strand: 'developing the team' provided a context for boundary crossing when SENCo1 voiced an idea for a new project. Her interjection led to a significant departure from a researcher presentation of work from the past with a proposal for of what could be done. Subsequent analysis showed that SENCo1's contribution was mediated by the discussion strands in 'Object 1: building the team' e.g. exploring 'common challenges' and 'planning approaches to initiate change'. This switch from presentation to discussion shifted the team's discourse from a review of what had been done, to a constructive exploration of what might be done in the future. This interjection culminated in joint decisions about future directions for the team's work which would have far reaching consequences.

Further scrutiny of transcripts of this discourse highlighted that SENCo1's proposal for future project had included elements from each of the strands and sub-strands identified in 'Object 1: building the team' including discursive activity relating to the 'Negotiating priorities', 'Planning the work' and 'Extending partnerships' strands of Object 1. The excerpt also provides an illustration of the ways in which explicit and implicit mediation occurred side by side naturally in the course of the team's discussions.

Excerpt from Meeting 1

SENCo1 ... I don't want to interrupt this but ... what I want to do is to make some tapes ... because we haven't got much have we? ... To go for a multi sensory approach ... I think it would be an idea to use the ... to make tapes...

EP ... because there are the books that have been developed in ... well SENCo1 you say...

SENCo1 ... we have a child (Pupil1) who has a lot of difficulties ... and we are getting ready to help him get started on helping him to be able to read ... early steps ... but there are no books appropriate for him ... so (his Support Assistant) made some... she has made books that are appropriate for him ... so they are not ideal... but at least there is the beginning of a structure ... in the vocabulary ... and patterns of speech... and we have just been trialling them with other pupils ...because there are no Welsh reading books ... at that level ... these are a lot, lot easier than anything that we have that is published ... simple cvc (consonant-vowel-consonant words) patterns ... and things that are relevant to children with additional needs ... with single words ... and lots of repetition ...

EP so we have copied them in black and white so we can share them ... I think that some of you may already have had them ...

SENCo3 I have ... they are like things the children have come out with ... I have started using them with Ys 1 and 2 in a group ... so we talk about the book in one session ... then we share it...the advantage is that we can read them in one session ... and then come back to them ...

SENCo1 ...but could we ask the Commissioners if they ... you know, say ... this is the way you could it...(the way) we see it ... or ... as you have suggested ... offer it as a starting point... ...so could we put something together and say that is what we need? ...or is that too ambitions?

EP ... there will be a Commissioning Meeting in November ... and maybe we will be invited to go there...

SENCo2 I was invited to one of those meeting ... about 5 years ago... it's a day for ideas really ... and then Commissioning Officer says we like this and we like that ...and takes them to ... to a panel down in Cardiff ... and one or two things came out of it ... I think ...

EP ... and maybe if we are there ... we will be able to input more into the process ... and that something will come out of it ... they may be interested in the Oracy resource ...

SENCo1 ...or ... reading books ... because what I was thinking was ... how ... right ...no put downs now ... but what I have been looking at is this, is how ...to use the language structures of Scheme1 (Welsh language resource) ... so what I did was look at their key words at the earliest level ... so I was thinking how hard would it be to devise a reading scheme ... to go with (Scheme1) ... so that all those resources and reinforcement activities would be relevant...yes ... and it's not as easy as in English ... but I had a go ... remember that they are for Infants ... so I have got (2 characters) 'Sal' and 'Mal'.

Well (in Scheme1)) there is phonetic section. ... and a language section - key words ... and there is a section of diagnostics (assessment tools) ... there are resources there to help children learn the things they do not know ... and then there is the test to see if they have got it or not after ... at least it is a starting point ...

But there are no reading books with (Scheme1) ...it is just the scheme of work so if there was a reading scheme to go with it...

Excerpt from Meeting 1 (continued)

- SNT1 *But it is an outline to how the language is constructed – the building blocks ...*
- SENCo1 *So what I was thinking is if they were available ... you could read the book and then ... do (the activity) like we do with schemes in English ... so that is what I was thinking ... and there could be resources.*
- SNT1 *...and phonic reinforcement activities like (an English medium resource to support progress in phonics).*
- SENCo1 *So I was trying to get a structure of cvc words using 'a' to start with ...and some of the key words from Scheme1 like 'yn' (in), 'ac' (and) and 'ar' (on) ... now don't laugh ...so there a some ideas for reading books ... and then trying to include the language pattern, 'O, na!' (Oh no!)*
- And so I thought ... if I could do that ... it feels impossible ... so what I did was using the letter 'a' ... and I also thought that there were lots of words that children mix up ... like 'yr (the)' 'yn' (in)*
- ...*
- So ... but I don't know enough about phonetics and the development of children ... but what if ... instead of starting (from scratch) ... so here we go ... we have got (Scheme1) ... so there are the words ...so could we put something together and say that is what we need or is that too ambitions?*
- EP *How many (books) have you got SNT1?*
- SNT1 *I have got one ...*
- SENCo1 *Have you got it here?*
- EP *Would you be willing...?*
- SNT1 *I can bring it next time ...*
- EP *So do we want to think about bringing books for discussion next time...?*
- SENCo1 *Yes ... because we have made a plan already ...I know it is not ready yet... but as I say these books (for Pupil1) are just a stop gap ... because they have been structured for him... they haven't been structured for children with Dyslexia ... or for children in Welsh-medium schools ...but the vocabulary will be ...*
- ...*
- EP *...so what I have been trying to do is to summarise what we have said (on the flip chart)... so ... planning reading books to work alongside (Scheme1) ... is that right? And then maybe to get together reinforcement resources too... is that right?*
- SENCo1 *What I want to know what's what ... how is all this going to work in with the meeting with (Commissioning Officer) ... are we going to talk about this ... what we have just been talking about with these people at the meeting ...?*
- EP *Yes...*
- SENCo1 *...and are we going to suggest this to them?*
- EP *...yes ... and as we have had the invitation maybe we could chase it up with Commissioning Officer ... we don't want to miss the opportunity...*
- SENCo2 *...perhaps there is some way that she could come to one of our meetings...*

SENCo1's contribution represented a significant instance of boundary crossing, a 'departure' which became the starting point for 'development' in a new phase of object orientated activity. This provided an illustration of how a general object like Object 1 would expand and develop, and from which new objects would emerge e.g. 'Object 2: evaluation, creation and development of resources'. The discourse also highlights how the idea of making books was tentatively expressed for fear that the idea was 'too ambitious'. In recognising the potential of the idea, other team members supported the 'departure' contribution. This emerging consensus facilitated the 'development' of the 'Emerging Object1.vi: coping with risk and building resilience'. The team's reception of the initial idea was instrumental in transforming the initial 'departure' into a 'development' of plans for future activity and is arguably an example of how transformative discourse tended to be distributed among the team as a whole.

7.1.3 Issues of affect

Narratives gathered in discussions at team meetings and in individual interviews foreground high levels of commitment to the work. This included expressions of the challenges faced in practice and of the needs of the children they teach. These highlighted that the implications of these problems for practice, for learners, and for the team as practitioners are experienced as affective tensions. These tensions became an essential driver which motivated transformations of perspectives about what could be possible. The emerging processes enabled the team to engage in new ways of working with each other, with the local authority, and further afield. Initially these drivers tended to be experienced and expressed rather negatively as frustration which was manifested as anger and helplessness.

'I feel so passionate about this don't I? Maybe I am not the one to ask because I am so passionate a about my country and about the children with additional needs.' (SENCo1)

'Over the years we have had to fight for everything, fight for resources, fight to have courses put on, to get notes though the medium of Welsh, everything. And I think that people are seeing now that we have rights, that we deserve to be recognised and I think that we are now. This has raised our profile.' (SENCo5)

Team members also reported how the need to make more adequate provision for the learners in their care provided incentives.

'So, obviously there was a huge need, sense of urgency to work together to produce practical things that would help the staff involved and in so doing help all the children that we all are trying to help'. (SNT1)

Team members expressed frustrations about aspects of the work that had not proceeded according to plan, but, over time, contributions demonstrated increased levels of resilience and the determination to continue with the work.

So the knock backs are important, of course it is upsetting too – don't forget that. But it's a sure thing that within the group we would talk it over with one another and sort it out together, that that gives us strength to turn it into a challenge instead of just getting down about it. (SENCo1)

Moreover, members expressed the view that the team and its work would be an ongoing project with a life beyond the present team, and in which enthusiasm for the work is motivated by the desire to engender change for learners:

'I think that the enthusiasm is still there, it has been a number of years since we started this and (usually) you tend to start things and then you have had enough or you lose heart. But I see that the enthusiasm is just growing all the time and I think that that is amazing'. (SENCo1)

Team members also expressed perceptions that this enthusiasm would persist through changes in the make-up of the group which would inevitably take place over time.

'Who knows in ten years that the group will still be going, but that the group would be totally different because people have retired, changed their jobs, and the group will be different, but so what?' (SENCo2)

7.2 DISCOURSE AND LANGUAGE: IDENTITY AND POWER

I have described implications of marginalisation associated with being a minority group in the local authority and the transformations that occurred over the course of the team's work together which led the team to feel more empowered and resilient.

We are now making things happen to prevent us from being isolated. In a way we are not isolated anymore because we have taken action so that we are not isolated any more. (SENCo1)

7.2.1 Positioning, power and control: working and learning within

organisations

Daniels (2006, p.46) suggests that while CHAT facilitates studies of organisational learning, it is also important to explore the positioning of individuals within institutions. He offers Bernstein's (1996) approach to the modelling of pedagogic practice in terms of 'power' and 'control' to describe institutions using the concepts of 'classification' and 'framing' as a way to do this. The notion of 'classification' (C) provides a framework for the analysis of the relative strength of boundaries between categories such as professional groupings within institutions. In contrast, 'framing' (F) offers a framework for the description of the degree to which interactions within institutions are controlled. Classification and framing may be either weaker (C-, F-) or stronger (C+, F+).

Applications' of this approach to the present study offered a framework for articulating of trajectories of organisational change occurring as a result of the team's work. Within more traditional models of in-service training framing is stronger (F+) as training providers regulate both what is being taught and how it will be taught. It was envisaged that in the present study framing would weaken (F-) because the team would operate as a democratic community with greater control over its work and ways of working. It was also envisaged that the concept of 'classification' would apply to the team's position within the local and national communities where opportunities for networking more widely would result in weaker classification (C-). Analysis of shifts in patterns of Classification and Framing provide a means to describe and chart changes in the team's work, and the implications of this for the team's independence and autonomy, for networking with partners; and for the professional identity of the team.

'Once the opportunity is there and the confidence can develop (and) we have faith in ourselves as a group. (It is) as if it has given us some, self respect if you like, because before we were just Welsh SENCos meeting with someone in English who says, 'this is what is happening in the special needs world'. But now we feel that we are creating what is happening in the special education world'. (SENCo1)

The transformations that have occurred for the professional identity of members of the team as they undertake action on their own behalf and on behalf the pupils that they teach are viewed by the team as being a highly significant outcome of the team's work to jointly address problem that are encountered in Welsh-medium practice.

7.2.3 Developing as professionals: change and professional identity

Team members report on changes in the identity as professionals working in the team and the sense of strength that has grown as a result of the working as a team, and also together with others at local, regional and national levels. Their reports highlight their awareness of having been empowered by the experience.

I think there has been a sense that we are not going to give in whatever is thrown at us. it is because we have been fighting all along, but this time the fighting is easier because we are together. Before it was just whinge, whinge, here we go again. But now, 'hey OK, hold on, we are strong, we are a group, we are the (team)'. Everyone in the local authority must think, 'who on earth do they think they are?' Do we care? No. We will just fight (and) we'll just get through the hoops. Is that confidence? Or maybe self belief, maybe as a group we have more self belief, not self as individual but self as group' (SENCo1)

Team member comments also highlight how the work may have contributed to changes for practice and because of this for learners as part of an ongoing process of reflective professional development.

'Then you start questioning yourself and that that is a good thing isn't it? Because if we do not question ourselves. That is the nature of working with children. If one way doesn't work you have to go a different way about it (SNT2)

7.3 QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF TEAM PERSPECTIVES BASED ON SHARED VALUES - KEY THEMES EMERGING FROM TEAM MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS

Whilst discursive evidence for qualitative analysis predominates in the analysis of change for the team, quantitative approaches are brought to bear in the analysis of the degree to which key values are shared within the team. For this purpose transcript data were reviewed with a view to determining individual team member perspectives of the benefits of team working. These benefits are closely related to the foci of object oriented activity. This analysis focuses on eleven key values and the degree to which these values were shared by individual team members.

Transcripts of team meetings and individual interviews were interrogated for contributions that reflect the personal values of team members. Quantitative analysis provides a measure of the degree to which values were shared by individual team members as a proportion of 11, the total number of team members over the course of the study. This data is illustrated with examples of team members' quotations.

Figure 7.2 Team perspectives on the value of working together

Working within the team offers:

1. mutual support of practitioners working through medium of Welsh;
2. opportunities to work together in Welsh;
3. opportunities to express views and take action - needs identification;
4. opportunities to express views and take action - resourcing implications;
5. opportunities for working on self identified developmental project work;
6. individual and collective professional development;
7. opportunities to find a collective voice and the confidence to express shared views;
8. opportunities for networking to raise the profile of the team - recognition of expertise and skills;
9. opportunities to work to strengthen a marginal position – for practitioners;
10. opportunities to work to strengthen a marginal position – for practice; and
11. opportunities to work to strengthen a marginal position – to address inequalities.

In the sections that follow these eleven values are considered separately in the first instance and then together.

7.3.1: Mutual support of practitioners working through medium of Welsh

Team members expressed their sense of being in a significant minority within the local authority where the number of schools making provision in Welsh or bilingually formed just 10% of the total number of primary schools. In addition training and

meetings tended to be conducted through the medium of English. Because of this team members felt that the team offered a forum for mutual support and a context in which it was 'safe' to express concerns, and in which to build increased levels of confidence.

'Being in the team is a great experience, it is so supportive and there is a consistency to it, no mood swings, it's the best team I have been in all my 30 years of being a teacher. The team is something positive when things are tough. It is dependable, stable and provides social links – especially at difficult times like now when our school is under threat (of closure) and when we feel that we aren't appreciated by colleagues'. (SENCo4)

Team processes viewed as being supportive of practice including being able to spend time together talking and listening to one another in ways which support interactions with others.

'Being together ...talking ...listening ...having people listen to us ...networking ...doing things practically' (SENCo3).

Furthermore team members expressed the view that the team provided a forum where it was safe to try new things and to take risks.

'It's like with the children, that is what I say all the time, 'push yourself', and that is what we need to do isn't it? To push ourselves to the limit, after the goal and if we fail well then we fail and that is that'. (SENCo5)

Scrutiny of transcripts data highlighted that this value was identified by each of the 11 team members as an important benefit of working together.

7.3.2: Opportunities to work together in Welsh

Team members voiced how important the opportunity to work with others in Welsh and that they valued the freedom of being able to express their views within that language.

'It is an effort. It is not a natural thing to do. If you are teaching children through the medium of Welsh and you have done Welsh assessments, translating into English to discuss it later is very hard'. (SENCo1)

Transcripts of meetings and interviews highlighted that this value was identified by 9 of the 11 team members as an important benefit of working together.

7.3.3: Opportunities to express views and take action - needs identification

Discursive evidence gathered in transcripts of team meetings and individual interviews highlighted how team members valued the team's role as a forum in which to express their understandings of the needs of their pupils, their needs as practitioners, and also to engage in activity to address them.

'So obviously there was a huge need, sense of urgency to work together to produce practical things that would help the staff involved and in so doing help all the children that we all are trying to help'. (SNT1)

This key value emerged as vital in the contributions of each of the 11 practitioners.

7.3.4: Opportunities to express views and take action - resourcing implications

Discursive evidence gathered highlighted team member views that the team offered a forum for sharing perspectives, where opinions could be expressed and heard at a local level with practitioners also working within Welsh-medium education, and where decisions could be reached collectively by the team, and where plans could be made and put into action.

'What I think is really good about this is that here it is the people who are experiencing the situation with people who are working in schools and with children who are doing it. (SENCo7)

The team voiced feelings of having achieved something of value for the learners with whom they work and for other practitioners as well.

'Well things have certainly developed you can see the outcomes now. It is nice to see that something has come out of all the work that everyone has put into it, something positive and something that we hope will be useful to lots of people'. (SENCo3)

This value was identified as important by each of the 11 members of the team.

7.3.5: Opportunities for working on self identified developmental project work

Team member comments place a high value on the team as a forum for working on projects they have identified in response to their experience in practice and to work together to address the needs of learners. Team members express how much they value the democratic ethos of the team, the opportunity to engage in team directed activity and the implications of this for the team's output and productivity.

'People offer, don't they, it is as if people show us different paths but then it is then up to the group to decide which path to follow'. (SENCo3)

'We don't have to share out the jobs, do we? Everybody just says 'I'll do that, I'll do that''. (SENCo5)

'I think that we get so much done in three hours, don't we? (SNT1)

This theme was identified as being important by 10 out of 11 members of the team.

7.3.6: Individual and collective professional development

Team member comments highlight that they recognise their own professional development as an important outcome of the team's work.

'I feel that I have learned a lot more about how children read and the things that can be done and without this team we wouldn't have time to discuss it'. (SENCo1)

Contributions illustrate that learning is as likely to come about through engagement in shared activities and in discussions with team members who have experienced similar difficulties.

'Having the time out just to discuss something bothering me... I feel right this is the place to ask the question because everyone is in the same situation, doing the same type of work, with similar experience'. (SNT2)

This theme was identified as being important by each of the 11 members of the team.

7.3.7: Opportunities to find a collective voice and confidence to express views

Team member express a sense that, as members of the team, our collective views can be expressed in ways which are more readily heard.

'We are not looking for people to do it for us. We want to work together to make things happen, we feel like people who can make a contribution, people with a voice, and people who can be responsible for what is needed for the children in our schools'. (SENCo1)

Comments highlight how liaison with practitioners across Wales raised the profile of the team beyond the local authority.

'We have made inroads into Wales nationally'. (SNT1)

This theme was identified as being important by 8 out of 11 members of the team.

7.3.8: Networking - raising the profile of the team, recognition of skills and expertise

Team member comments illustrate perspectives that as members of the team, their collective experience and expertise is more readily recognised, and that they have access to new platforms from which to share their professionalism with others.

'For instance, the success when (team members) went to (the national conference) last year, the books being animated online has been motivating for us all and made us even more committed to you and your research and all the work that we are doing, and the commissioning with (Publisher1) is the icing on the cake' (SNT1)

'We feel as if we are someone, we aren't just SENCos like individuals, we are a group, and when I talk to friends about the things we have done, they are very impressed about what we have achieved'. (SENCo2)

'I just explained the background, that we had got tired of everyone complaining that there weren't any resources and that there were no resources, and that we as a team of Welsh-medium SENCos had decided to do something about it, in the hope that we would be heard more. And I said, please come to our table this afternoon (to look at what we have done) and everyone did'. (SENCo1)

This theme was identified as being important by 9 of the 11 members of the team.

7.3.9: Opportunities to work to strengthen a marginal position – practitioners

Team comments highlight perspectives that they experience different challenges to colleagues in English-medium school and feel marginalised because of this in ways which have implications for their professional identity. Working as part of the team provides a context in which to address these needs.

'We are talking about national identity but (what about) personal identity? How much of this is, OK for the children, but how much for us too as adults teaching through the medium of Welsh. It's helping us to be with others like ourselves'. (SENCo1)

Team comments also reflect a sense of having achieved a shift in their own constructions of the implications of this marginalisation and of having developed a new resilience through their joint work together.

'That is why I always use it as an example (to others). I say that in the group that I work with we always used to sit around and grumble but now we go out and get things done. And I do use it when people are complaining. I say, 'stop your whinging', we went out and did something about it'. (SENCo4)

This theme was identified as being important by each of the 11 members of the team.

7.3.10: Opportunities to work to strengthen a marginal position – practice

Discursive evidence highlights how participating in the team's work engenders change for practice, particularly through the production of resources. This was viewed as being of value in their work with children. Comments also recognise that being able to trial new resources with learners provides invaluable feedback which enhances the effectiveness of the materials.

'It does make a difference because we use them (in our work). We're not just writing them in an office. We are writing them, trying them out with the children, seeing where there are mistakes, trying them out with each other ... and I think that also is a source of pride for us because here we are, we work hard in our jobs and then we also are doing something extra to that'. (SENCo2)

Comments illustrated how this confidence has grown and replaced earlier feelings of doubt.

'In the beginning I have to admit that I used to think where are we going with this, but now I can see its worth and I must say I really do enjoy it. And when people at school say, 'Are you going on that again, what do you do?' I say, 'Books, books for children!'" (SENCo5)

'Now we have become a powerful group. To start with the only thing I wanted from the group was the support of each other to help us, personally with our isolated situation in the Welsh schools. That might still be the case to some extent, but that is totally secondary to what the group the offering now. We're not just there to get support because we are isolated anymore. We are now making things happen to prevent us from being isolated, in a way we are not isolated anymore because we have made sure that we are not, we have taken action so that we are not isolated anymore.' (SENCo1)

This theme was identified as being important by each of the 11 members of the team.

7.3.11: Opportunities to work to strengthen a marginal position - addressing inequalities

Discursive evidence highlights how the desire to strengthen a marginal position motivated work which strived for equality of resourcing for the sake of learners.

'You could go so far as to say that what we are trying to have is equal rights for our children'. (SENCo1)

The sense of inequality motivated team members to work assertively in new ways. Team member comments highlight understandings that this has brought about changes in the way they are perceived by others.

'I think that people are seeing now that we deserve to be recognised and I think that is where we are now. (The work) has raised our profile'. (SENCo5)

This theme was identified as being important by each of the 11 members of the team.

7.4 OUTCOMES OF QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF TEAM PERSPECTIVES BASED ON SHARED VALUES

Quantitative analysis of the data highlights that while some variation exists between the perspectives of individual team members there are generally high levels of agreement about their importance. Levels of agreement are expressed numerically as proportions of 11 - the total number of team members participating during the period of the research study in Table 7.1 and below.

The data show that seven of the eleven key themes were identified as being important by each of the eleven members of the team and that all eleven key themes were classed as being important by at least eight of the eleven members. Some of these differences are likely to reflect individual team member's circumstances, for instance the two members who did not identify being able to work in Welsh as being important to them because, while fluent in Welsh, English was their first language and they would have felt more comfortable working in that language.

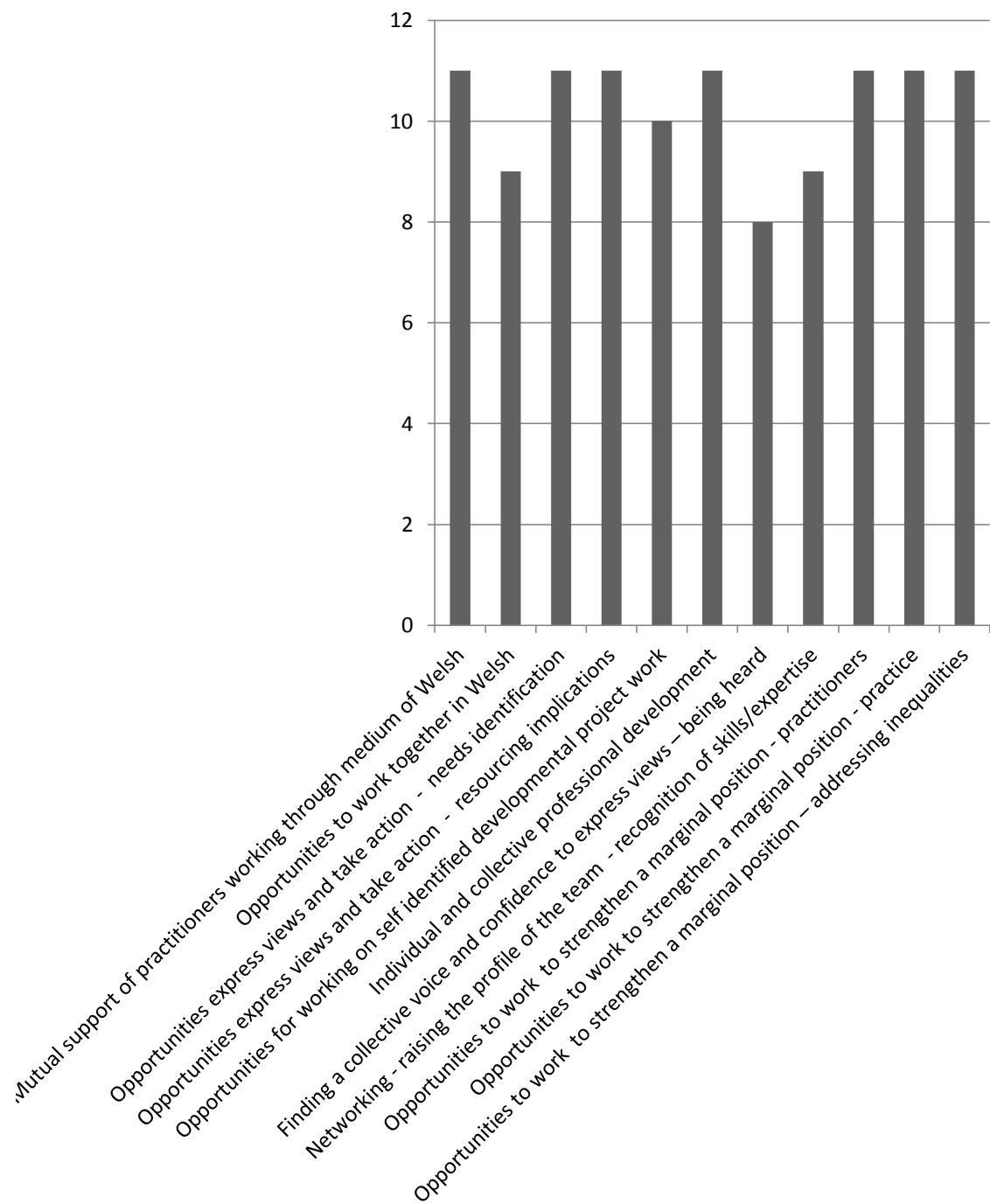
Figure 7.3 Overview of team perspectives on the value of working together

Working within the team offers :	S E N C o 1	S E N C o 2	S E N C o 3	S E N C o 4	S E N C o 5	S E N C o 7	S E N C o 8	S E N C o 9	S N T 1	S N T 2	E P	Totals/11
Mutual support of practitioners working through medium of Welsh	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	11/11
Opportunities to work together in Welsh	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/		/		9/11
Opportunities to express views and take action - needs identification	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	11/11
Opportunities to express views and take action - resourcing implications	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	11/11
Opportunities for working on self identified developmental project work	/	/	/	/	/	/	/		/	/	/	10/11
Individual and collective professional development	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	11/11
Opportunities to find a collective voice and confidence to express views	/	/		/	/	/			/	/	/	8/11
Opportunities for networking to raise the profile of the team - recognition of expertise and skills	/	/	/	/	/	/			/	/	/	9/11
Opportunities to work to strengthen a marginal position – for practitioners	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	11/11
Opportunities to work to strengthen a marginal position – for practice	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	11/11
Opportunities to work to strengthen a marginal position – to address inequalities	/	/		/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	11/11

In addition, seven of the key values were expressed by each of the eleven members of the team. In contrast the key value: Finding a collective voice and being heard' was identified by just 8 out of a total of 11 practitioners. This may be explained by the fact that, two of the three had attended just 3 of the 10 team meetings examined in the study. In addition, these same team members did not identify 'opportunities for networking to raise the profile of the team' as a key priority from their perspective. This may be because their involvement in the team's work at the time of the study was more limited than that of their team mates. Taken as a whole this analysis suggests that shared values were generally negotiated and had emerged in the context of team's work. It also suggests that the eleven values generally and were

viewed as being instrumental in work to build capacity, strength and resilience for the pursuance object oriented activity within challenging contexts. This data is also represented in column form in Chart 7.1 below.

Chart 7.1: Team perspectives on the value of working together



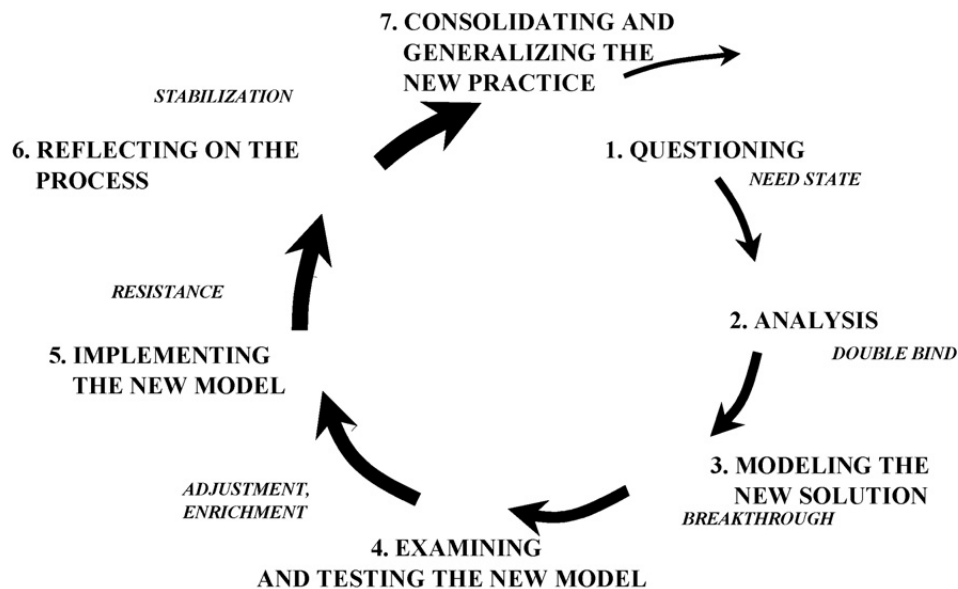
7.5 SUBJECT POSITIONS AND THE TEAM

In this chapter my account has focused on the team's response to working together and learning together in a time of change, and how object oriented activity motivated and supported them during the work. My account has also focused on team perceptions of transformations which had come about for the team and its work. Transcript data highlight how in working this way, the team stepped outside their previous remit and extended the scope of their roles and developed new expertise in undertaking new forms of work. Team activity included reviewing practice and resources for teaching, negotiating priorities for action; and developing new partnerships with others locally, regionally and nationally. Transcript data highlighted affective implications of this as initial doubts and fears gave way to emerging levels of confidence about the team's capacity to effect change for themselves and for practice. This led to enhanced levels of resilience in the face of setbacks and reduced feeling of marginalisation.

Developmental Work Research approaches using the adapted Change Laboratory described in Chapter 3 framed the team's work providing explicit mediation for object oriented activity. However, the work was also mediated by expressions of shared experiences of problems, shared feelings and shared understandings of how things could be different. Moreover, the analysis highlights that over the course of the study forms of explicit mediation became internalised and integrated together as '*streams of communicative action*' (Wertsch, 2007, p.181) to be expressed in new forms of object oriented activity.

These transformations in working practices brought about tangible changes for practice through the production of resources. In addition team member accounts stress their own sense of having been transformed by their engagement in the work. Team working processes made it possible for contradictions to be externalised by individuals for consideration and analysis by the whole team. Shared understandings about the nature of problems and the possibilities for actions contributed to decision making and plans for future work as illustrated in Fig 7.2 below.

Figure 7.3: Sequence of learning actions in an expansive learning cycle
(Engeström and Sannino 2010, p.8).



Object oriented activity to develop the team represented an opportunity to work with increased levels of self determination with the support of fellow practitioners working within Welsh-medium education, in the language of their choice. Team processes included work to review existing practice and take action to bring about change for their practice. Engaging in activity oriented towards 'Object1: building the team' resulted in outcomes not only for practice but also for the team as practitioners bringing about transformations of professional identity and engendering resilience to external pressures beyond their control.

Developments for the team, at the subject level of the CHAT model emerged in the context of, and as a result of object oriented activity to build the team into a forum for bringing about change for practice. Such changes, in turn, facilitated the emergence of new objects and the expansion of existing objects which will be considered in detail in the next chapter.

8: OBJECTS OF TEAM WORKING: LEARNING AS CREATION OR CONSTRUCTION

Team member accounts highlight how the team's work developed over time as it had become possible to take decisions about priorities, to respond to challenges encountered in practice, and to develop strategies for engaging with them. Trajectories of change reveal that at the outset, individual team members generally felt uncertain about their roles within the team, the authority's purpose in forming it, and even their own reasons for engaging in the earlier project from which the present study had emerged.

'What I knew was that we were a group of Welsh SENCoS coming together to talk things that were relevant to our job as Welsh-medium primary schools. It was using other people's resources. That what it was in the beginning'. (SENCo5)

The team's work together was informed by commonly held concerns and early activity was seen as an opportunity to participate in a shared experience with other practitioners working through the medium of Welsh, using the Welsh language, and in ways which included opportunities to express views and take action to solve commonly held problems.

Initial expressions of commonality tended to take the form of enumerations of difficulties faced in practice. Although not directly constructive, such discussions provided an outlet for deeply felt concerns about workload and inequalities in the availability of resources for teaching and assessment. Further analysis of team member reports highlights how these discussions had been formative and contributed to the development of shared understandings of common experience which sustained the team through its early stages. In time, this work provided a context within which team members expressed their desire to work on self directed projects from which the present study emerged.

'I think there has been a sense that we are not going to give in, whatever is thrown at us. It is because we have (always) been fighting, but this time the fighting is easier, because we are together. Before it was just whinge, whinge, here we go again, but now we are strong, we are a team.' (SENCo1)

Increased levels of autonomy allowed the team to determine and adopt new objects of activity where these levels of self determination motivated and sustained the work. Evidence gathered in meetings and in individual interviews revealed high levels of internal agreement about shared values listed below which have been analysed quantitatively and reported in Chapter 7.

Figure 8.1 Team perspectives on the value of working together

Working within the team offers:

1. mutual support of practitioners working through medium of Welsh;
2. opportunities to work together in Welsh;
3. opportunities to express views and take action - needs identification;
4. opportunities to express views and take action - resourcing implications;
5. opportunities for working on self identified developmental project work;
6. individual and collective professional development;
7. opportunities to find a collective voice and the confidence to express views ;
8. opportunities for networking to raise the profile of the team - recognition of expertise and skills;
9. opportunities to work to strengthen a marginal position – for practitioners;
10. opportunities to work to strengthen a marginal position – for practice; and
11. opportunities to work to strengthen a marginal position – to address inequalities.

Team member contributions highlighted that they value opportunities for sharing knowledge, skills and expertise for positive outcomes for pupils and for working together to strengthen a rather marginal position.

‘We are working more closely together and I just feel that if I did want to ask a question that I could ask everyone, and I would respect everyone’s perspective’.
(SENCo5)

Over the course of the work team contributions also highlighted perspectives about issues relating to their development as confident practitioners, and as individuals able to respond to challenges in self identified project work. Ultimately levels of empowerment have been raised and team members felt able and willing to take on new roles and embrace new responsibilities.

‘There is just a sense of pride, this is us and we are making a difference for the children and hopefully we are working for the Welsh language too, not just in the LA but we are sending these books to everywhere. There is a sense of belonging to the group’. (SENCo1)

8.1 OBJECT ORIENTED ACTIVITY AND THE TEAM

In the sections that follow I describe team processes associated with object oriented activity. I have used ‘D’ analysis (Middleton, 2010) to frame the analysis of discursive data which identifies and charts changes as they occurred where the changing perspectives of team members about the team, its work and their professional roles. Perspectives about the team’s standing within settings, the local authority and nationally were of particular interest. Trajectories of change within each object are illustrated as movement through ‘D’ analysis strands from ‘diexis’ – the initial voicing of an idea - through stages of ‘deliberation’ and ‘delineation’, contributions which engendered key changes in that area of activity.

These trajectories of change are also charted as the changes using the frameworks of 'classification' (the boundaries between the team and others) and 'framing' (the degree of control acting on the team), where changes from strong classification to weak classification, and from strong framing to weak framing are represented as $C^{++} \gg C^{--}$ and $F^{++} \gg F^{--}$ respectively.

8.2 OBJECTS OF TEAM ACTIVITY

The discussion for each object and its strands is structured in accounts that illustrate changes in the way the team worked and learned together. It will show how early objects of activity, determined at the start of the team's work together had tended to respond to goals laid down by the local authority and how these were adopted and developed by the team. Existing objects expanded over time emerging in response to priorities of work identified by the team as strategies for working towards them were developed and demanded fresh approaches. Moreover, new objects emerged in the course of the work, for instance in relation to funding, professional identity, and the team's participation in networks with others locally, regionally and nationally.

Object 1: Building the team relates the development of the team as a forum for working and learning together. Six sub strands were identified and are listed below

Object 1: Building the team

- Object 1.i: Coming together: multiple perspectives - agreements and disagreements;
- Object 1.ii: Developing ways of working - assuming roles and sharing responsibilities;
- Object 1.iii: Managing challenges, adversity and marginalisation;
- Object 1.iv: Thinking, working and learning together;
- Object 1.v: Looking outwards – networking; and
- Object 1.vi: Coping with risks and building resilience.

Object 2: Evaluation, Creation and development of resources relates to the teams work in evaluating, developing, trialling and publishing of resources. Three strands were identified.

Object 2: Evaluation, Creation and development of resources

- Object 2.i: Developing resources - oracy
- Object 2.ii: Assessing existing literacy resources
- Object 2.iii: Developing resources: literacy

8.3 EMERGING OBJECTS OF TEAM ACTIVITY

Three new objects of activity emerged in the course of the study.

Emerging Object A: Funding the team's work

Emerging Object B: Professional development – reconstructions of individual and collective professional identity

Emerging Object C: Knowing how to know others

Three strands emerged:

- Emerging Object Ci: Knowing how to know others - locally;
- Emerging Object Cii: Knowing how to know others - regionally; and
- Emerging Object Ciii: Knowing how to know others - nationally.

The first of these, 'emerging object A: funding the team's work', related to the team's need to source funds to release members to attend monthly meetings. The second, 'emerging object B: professional development – reconstructions of individual and collective professional identity', was recognised as team members acknowledged that they were developing as a practitioner team and as individual practitioners. 'Emerging object C: knowing how to know others' related to the team's growing desire to interact with others in networking and sharing activities at every level.

Initially, emerging object C was largely driven by conditions and constraints made by local and national partners as preconditions for considerations of requests for funding. At the outset, the team viewed these constraints pragmatically as necessities to be endured in order for the work to continue. Such constraints came to be characterised as 'hoops' through which the team was required to 'jump'. However, unintended and unforeseen benefits of such networking led some 'hoops' to be re-characterised as 'bridges', for instance, where they led to the forging of new partnerships which in due course significantly enhanced aspects of the team's work.

One example of this was the requirement to engage in work with regional partnerships which was imposed by potential national partners. This had caused the team to form a partnership with colleagues working in a neighbouring authority. One of these partners generously reviewed and edited the draft oracy scheme on the team's behalf. This detailed peer scrutiny of the content and language of the emerging document was judged to be invaluable and to have significantly enhanced the document. As a result of this and other experiences, the team became more

open to the potential advantages of external requirements to work in community with others at local, regional and national levels.

This analysis addresses each object and strand separately through the application of 'D' analysis principles which are viewed as representing a movement through a hierarchy of development through the 5 'D' analysis strands and are illustrated as a synthesis of perspectives articulated in multiple discussions of the topic and reflected in the contemporaneous minutes gathered which were agreed by the team at each stage.

Such sequences of talk typically began with expressions of contradictions and problems which had implications for practice, initially voiced by an individual team member but taken up for consideration and elaboration by different members of the team, who would describe their own experiences in relation to the initial contribution. These discussions would be summarised, recorded and agreed in the contemporaneous shared minutes for that meeting.

Similar sequences of talk might be raised and explored more than once over the course of several meetings. The examination of transcript data from team meetings over time revealed how shifts in perspectives contributed to departures and lead to developments, new ways of working with each other and with others.

Typically, team meeting transcripts highlighted how team discussions would, over time, become clarified in ways which 'delineated' shared understandings about the nature of the issue and where possibilities and difficulties could be deliberated. The object oriented activity described in the sections that follow highlights how key decisions would be made in which the team articulated possibilities for alternative responses to the initial problem, departures. Such changes in time contributed to the development of new ways of working and shifts in professional identity.

The discussion of object oriented activity below considers the ways in which existing objects expanded and new objects emerged. These shifts are illustrated as a synthesis of the team's shared perspectives that were expressed over the course of a number of team meetings. This process is illustrated by way of statements that reflected the consensus at that time which is revealed in the discursive evidence gathered. As part of the validation processes team members agreed that these reflected the transformations in object oriented activity which took place over time.

This development is also considered through the lens provided by the notions of Framing and Classification (Daniels, 2010). Key conclusions drawn are further illustrated with examples of discourse of team members or team partners.

8.4 OBJECT 1: BUILDING THE TEAM

Object 1 was established prior to the present study but became adopted and expanded by the team. Ultimately, six strands were identified which are considered in turn in the sections that follow. In this object the team responded to externally imposed goals in the first instance, where 'framing' was initially stronger but diminished as the team began to take more decisions for itself. Moreover, in early meetings the team's links with others which were generally limited at the outset of the work, expanded greatly over the course of the study. Because of this the degree of 'classification' between the team and others diminished as team members undertook new roles in partnerships with other partners e.g. Regional partners and Publisher1.

8.4.1 Object 1.i: Becoming a team

Object 1.i included activity that reflected the team's efforts to respond to the local authority's earlier project which identified them as a group who would benefit from working together. Adopting this object the team built on this initial premise to develop a sense of team identity and purpose. In addition, Object 1.i reflects initial underlying tensions about differences of opinion within the team and how this became more accepted and then valued as part of the team's creative processes.

'What we do is so informal and everyone gets to say their piece and no one is afraid to say what they think, to give their opinion, and because there are never any 'put downs' even if we don't agree with every point of view we are respectful of each other'. (SENCo5)

Object 1.i Becoming a team	'D' analysis strands	C/F
Becoming a team – getting to know one another, valuing individual strengths, accepting differences, coping with conflict, engendering change	<p><u>Diexis</u> – ...who are we? ...what do we have in common?</p> <p><u>Delineation</u> – ...the LA identifies us as a group because...</p> <p><u>Deliberations</u> - ...we are a team who can work together...</p> <p><u>Departures</u> - ...we have ideas about what we might do together...</p> <p><u>Developments</u> - ...we want to work together on...</p>	<p>C++</p> <p>C+/F++</p> <p>C-</p> <p>C--</p>
<p>Coping with differences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> accepting and coming to value differences as a source of development for all; and accepting disagreements as inevitable and coming to view them as part of creative processes/ 	<p><u>Diexis</u> - ...our settings are different because they serve different communities...</p> <p><u>Delineation</u> - ...we may have different priorities because of these differences...we may not always agree....</p> <p><u>Deliberation</u> – ...we are still a team, even when we don't agree...</p> <p><u>Departures</u> – ...we can have useful discussions when we don't agree...'</p> <p><u>Development</u> – ...disagreements are useful and support the team's work ...</p>	<p>C++</p> <p>C+</p> <p>C--</p>

8.4.2 Object 1.ii: Assuming roles and responsibilities

Object 1.ii included the development team processes to address emerging tasks. Expectations of what might be possible were raised as the team came to view the meetings as productive sessions. Team meetings also became viewed as being sessions in which the whole team worked together on demanding activities in self determined projects, and in which each team member undertook roles and tasks to further the team's work.

'I think that we get so much done in three hours. You know a lot of work has got done and you couldn't have got that much done if you were working on your own'. (SNT1)

Object 1.ii: Assuming roles and responsibilities	'D' analysis strands	C/F
<p>Team members undertake responsibilities that reflect their individual strengths and expertise.</p> <p>Roles included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researcher; • Systems minder – enabling the team's management of processes; • Innovator – generating ideas; • Team Experts relating to individual areas of strength e.g. literacy, music, linguistics, oracy development, small school issues, bilingual school issues; • Questioners – who maintain a critical perspective; • Administrator – an evolving role for funding purposes; and • Resource Testers - conducting trials of emerging materials 	<p><u>Departure</u> – ...I am individual who could contribute something of value ...</p> <p><u>Development</u> – ...I am willing to contribute something the team will value...</p>	<p>F-</p> <p>F--</p>

Over time team members willingly volunteered to undertake new responsibilities within team meetings e.g. taking the lead in directing an aspect of team activity.

We work really hard, don't we? But everyone says that they look forward to it because, because - it's daft really - but it is us. We don't get that in anything else. Really it is as simple as that'. (SENCo1)

In addition to attending and participating in team meetings team members might engage in a range of activities between the meetings e.g. liaison with partners when attending meetings with local or regional partners. Alternatively they might undertake to complete tasks in the intervals between meetings e.g. trialling oracy materials with learners across the primary phases. The tasks undertaken and responsibilities assumed could be demanding and time consuming but reflected shared incentives that the outcomes of the team's work should be of the highest quality.

'So we can get it to work right before looking to take it any further, it is work by teachers for teachers'. (SENCo4)

Of particular note was the tendency for the roles and tasks to be undertaken voluntarily and in response to shared understandings of what needed doing.

'Last time there were 7 jobs and 7 people and so we all just said right I'll do this and I'll do that'. (SENCo5)

8.4.3 Object 1.iii Managing challenges, adversity and marginalisation

Activity oriented towards Object1:iii tended to reflect shifts in perspective which over time enabled the team to reconstruct challenges, problems and marginalising pressures, and set aside assumptions that they are powerless:

'We shouldn't have to work like this someone should do something about it' (SENCo5).

Instead the team began to express greater independence where problems were broached with tentative expressions of confidence that solutions were not only possible but also that the team is likely to be equal to the task.

'But could we ask the (National Commissioning Body), say this is the way you could it, (the way) we see it, or offer it as a starting point? So could we put something together and say that is what we need? Or is that too ambitions?' (SENCo1)

Ultimately, team members began to assert their ability to assume roles which included leadership, to share the work more widely with a view to providing support to others. Activity also included establishing working relationships with others nationally:

'Different milestones were reached along the way for instance the success when (team (members) went to the (national) conference, and the interest from (National Grid for Learning (Wales)). It has been motivating for us all and made us even more committed to you and your research, to the whole project, all the work that we are doing'. (SNT1)

Object 1.iii: Managing challenges, adversity and marginalisation	'D' analysis strands	C/F
<p>Managing challenge, adversity, marginalisation</p> <p>Including shifts from:</p> <p>DEPENDENCY – '...what others should to do for us?';</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>INDEPENDENCE – '...what can we do for ourselves?'; and</p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>LEADERSHIP ROLES – '...what can we do with and for others?'</p>	<p><u>Diexis</u> - ...we face unique challenges ... someone should help us ...</p> <p><u>Delineation and Deliberation</u> - ...the challenges we face are ...</p> <p><u>Departure</u> - ...how can we work together for change for our practice...?</p> <p><u>Development</u> – ...the action we could take is. We could work with ... and ... on ...</p>	<p>C⁺⁺/F⁺⁺</p> <p>C⁺⁺/F⁺</p> <p>C⁺/F⁻</p> <p>C⁻/F⁻</p>

8.4.4 Object 1.iv: Thinking, working and learning together

Activity oriented towards this strand of Object1 tended to reflect developments of team processes to support developmental project work which emerged in the context of the team's activity. Early on in the studyteam members expressed uncertainty about adopting new ways of working.

'I think that when we were starting out we used to wonder how are we going to work and what are we going to work things, but together - many heads are better than one isn't it? And from that we have been able to work. We have decided on the work that will be appropriate for the schools and how other schools might be able to use them, and then we have built on that, with everybody each having their own ideas.' (SENCo2)

Some team members expressed doubts about whether it would be worth the risk:

'...what is the point of us making something, if perhaps it is out there, (that) someone has already done it?' (SENCo 9);

...or whether ideas were too ambitious:

'...sometimes I think that we are rather ambitious about some things, but then it is right about the books – there aren't any.' (SENCo4).

Object 1.iv: Thinking, working and learning together	'D' analysis strands	C/F
Establishing new ways of working – distributed thinking, self directed working, identifying needs in own practice, asking – <i>'...how can we ...?'</i> Implementing plans and evaluating outcomes.	<u>Diexis</u> - ... we are stronger if we work together...	C-
	<u>Delineation</u> – ...how can we work together and on what?'	C-/F-
	<u>Deliberation</u> – ... shall we work together for change on ...?	C-/F--
	<u>Departures</u> – ...we could try to ... by ... or ...	C-/F--
	<u>Development</u> – ...let's work together to... by ...	C-/F--

Team work processes centred on meetings which were used not only as a forum for debate and decision making but also a time for undertaking shared tasks. Team working generally took the form of discursive action focused towards agendas and goals which developed from one meeting to the next, building on approaches that worked and which particularly focussed on the distributed thinking.

'We co-operate very well. When you hit the wall somebody seems to overcome the problem and the solutions is found by somebody or other. Its great how resourceful people can be and how (when) there is a little bit of stress and you've just got to sort it, just got to get the punch line for the last page or whatever. And sometimes it is not just one person is it? It is like one or two small things come together that just make all the difference'. (SNT1)

Initial feelings of wariness were expressed about the research process and the audio recording device, the set up which included presentations projected on to a screen. In addition some reservations were expressed about the use of the Flip Chart as a developmental tool as opposed to a summative record.

'It bothers me that it is such a mess, the untidiness of it. I just want to take it down and make it tidy, that how I feel personally'. (SENCo5)

Such concerns were set aside in the interest of the flip chart's contribution to the work.

'Our ideas were evolving in front of our eyes – it was a working document that reflected our ideas. It allowed joint working (and) was a visual focus and a visual record that was available to all of the group'. (SENCo1)

8.4.5 Object 1.v: Becoming connected – Networking

Activity oriented towards this strand of Object1 reflected developments of team's work in community with others locally, regionally and nationally. Initially team members' contributions reflected perspectives that others, and in particular the local authority should be doing more to support their practice and liaising with others on the team's behalf.

'We don't want everyone to be phoning around, what we need is a structure from the (local authority officer), because we don't have time'. (SENCo1)

Object 1.v: Becoming connected - Networking	'D' analysis strands	C/F
Networking locally, regionally, nationally - learning how to know others, being known, and raising the professional profile of the team. Becoming connected - reducing marginalisation	<u>Diexis</u> - ...we face challenges ... people know but they do little to help.,,	C ⁺⁺ /F ⁺⁺
	<u>Delineation</u> - ...we would like change to happen in...	C ⁺⁺ /F ⁺
	<u>Deliberation</u> - ...could we work with ...on ...?	C-/F-
	<u>Departures</u> - ... other people are interested in working with us...	C-/F-
	<u>Development</u> - ...let's work withon...	C ⁻ -/F ⁻ -

As the team became more confident new ways of working were more likely to be considered. Even so team members continued to express fears that tasks would be too much for them and fears of failure or of wasting time.

'I think that we need people from outside the group too, later on maybe. There is a brilliant possibility there but I honestly don't know if we (can do it). We could start it but maybe we need someone who has done this before (to be) working with us from the start so that we don't waste time'. (SENCo1)

Reflections from later on in the team's work marked a significant shift in confidence which were articulated not only the desire to work on developmental projects but in the belief that the team were well placed to do so.

'We are not looking for people to do it for us. We want to work together to make things happen. We feel like people who can make a contribution, people with a voice, and people who can be responsible for what is needed for the children in our school'. (SENCo1)

This emerging resilience sustained the team through uncertainties, difficulties and setbacks. It was built on strength which was drawn from transformations to the team's professional identity and new perspectives of being able to tackle problems together which had seemed to be too difficult or too risky in the past.

Perceptions that the team was motivated and competent to effect change for learners were widely shared by the team's partners at every level.

'I have met several members of the team and have been impressed by their dedication and commitment to improving practice/resources for learners with additional learning needs – they are clearly passionate about their work'. (Officer for Commissioning, Welsh Assembly Government)

'My involvement with the team is at a regional level. From the initial meeting with members of (the team) it soon became apparent that the needs of both our regions were very similar. By working together to develop and evaluate much needed Welsh-medium resources to support not only children with additional learning needs but children across the ability range there is more parity in the resources available for school whatever their designated tongue may be'. (Regional Partner: Learning Development Advisory Teacher)

Local authority officers expressed the view that such networking was not only beneficial for the team and for Welsh-medium education but also for the authority as a whole and its enhanced standing among other local authorities in Wales.

'The team's links with (regional partner) learning development team and with Speech and Language Therapy team have meant that other agencies and other authorities have been pulled in and seen the work and been impressed by it. That has obviously been good for Local Authority by showboating good practice regionally and across all Wales, for instance the Welsh Assembly Government have taken note of the project'. (Local Authority Inclusion Officer)

Such perceptions were also expressed by team members who experienced this positive regard as validation and essential form of peer review.

'But the whole thing is that we have been in linking up with so many people like the teacher from (Regional Partner) and they know about the work; and the (national) conference and they all know about our work. Also they have shown such an interest in what we are doing, they were so nice there everyone wanted a set of books to take back with them. It was great they all could see that they were good'. (SENCo2)

8.5.6 Object 1.vi Being ambitious, embracing change and taking risks

Activity in Object 1.vi reflected changes in the team's aspirations for their work and for themselves. Early team reflections highlighted that prior to the study team members felt trapped and burdened by the specific challenge they encountered in their practice, hoping for change yet initially feeling unable to take action.

'I couldn't think outside the box because I just felt I was a full time teacher and I didn't want to take on any major project outside that'. (SNT1)

Object 1.vi: Being ambitious, embracing change, taking risks	'D' analysis strands	C/F
<p>Becoming ambitious, embracing risk, and taking risks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> team working outside individual and collective comfort zones locally, regionally and nationally; and assuming advisory and leadership roles locally and nationally. 	<p><u>Diexis</u> - ...we are just a small group with no power...I am just a ... I already have enough to do... someone else should do something ...</p>	C+/F++
	<p><u>Delineation</u> and <u>Deliberation</u> – ...stepping outside our / my comfort zone is a risk ...we / I might fail ...</p>	C+/F++
	<p><u>Departures</u> – ...the team is a safe place and we / I can offer something of value... ...we/I may fail but that is OK ...</p>	C-/F--
	<p><u>Development</u> – ...we can try this and see what happens...</p>	C-/F--

Discussions at meetings frequently turned to shortages of resources and the implications of this for practice. These discussions highlighted general agreements about what was required and what was not yet in existence, and of the need for change. This motivated the team to begin to take action and risk failure despite their doubts.

'Someone has got to say, 'Yes we are going to do it'. We are ambitious but we need to be ambitious because no one else is doing the work. Is there a way for you to see if anyone else is working this way? It is work by teachers for teachers and you are bringing us together. If you hadn't done it we wouldn't be doing it. And it is right for someone to say this needs to be done, and people are great because they think we can do it. I don't know if it will work'. (SENCo4)

Some attempts to share team perspectives more widely and which did not initially appear to bear fruit were experienced as disappointments and setbacks.

'EP and I went to a meeting that (National Commissioning Officer) chairs. She gets a group of people together from all over Wales to discuss what to commission by way of Welsh resources for the year ...and we went there and we made a pitch for our ideas. But what was clear was that they wanted ideas about what new resource should be created. So they had no interest at all in (the Oracy Project), nor the reading books because we have already done them. They just wanted ideas and then they would go to somewhere like Publisher1 and they would make them. But they do not want to publish things like this that have already been produced'. (SNT1)

In time team perspectives In time this liaison led to the national commissioning body's decision to put out a tender for a series of 50 reading books very similar to the 12 reading texts shared at the commissioning meeting, together with the suggestion that the team contact interested publishers with a view to offering to work with them in a consultative role. Experience led the team to new understandings of how ideas and relationships may not develop smoothly, and in due course contributed to new levels of resilience and a willingness to take risks which might fail.

'So the knock backs are important. Of course it is upsetting too – don't forget that but it's a sure thing that within the group we would talk it over with one another and sort it out together and that that would give us strength to turn it into a challenge instead of just getting down about it'. (SENCo1)

Whilst the team provided a safe place in which to explore new possibilities and consider new possibilities for working together, it also became a platform from which to embark on riskier ventures and pursue goals in which the outcomes may be uncertain, to feel sufficiently confident overall to risk the failure in specific activity.

'It's like with the children, that is what I say all the time, 'push yourself', and that is what we need to do isn't it? To push ourselves to the limit, after the goal, and if we fail, well then we fail and that is that'. (SENCo5).

8.6 OBJECT 2: CREATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF RESOURCES

Activity in Object 2 related to issues of resourcing for use in Welsh-medium education, including the quality of what was available, its fitness for purpose and also the gaps which are widely acknowledged at all levels of practice. Three strands are identified.

8.6.1 Object 2.i: Developing resources - Oracy

Activity oriented towards Object 2.1 was established at the initial departure moment in which the team embarked on self directed developmental project work.

Object 2.i: Developing resources - Oracy	'D' analysis strands	C/F
Developing resources - Oracy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing a structured approach to supporting oracy development in Welsh-medium education; Extending structure for the personal, social and emotional development of learners; Team working to develop vocabularies for structured oracy development. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structuring materials into a coherent programme of study; Trialling, reviewing, evaluating materials; Networking and liaison, inviting peer review locally, regionally and nationally. 	<u>Diexis</u> - ...oracy activities can support oracy development and personal, social health education...	C-/F-
	<u>Delineation</u> – ...using English medium resources is a problem – literal translations don't work...	
	<u>Deliberation</u> – ...we need a vocabulary to do this work with pupils...	C-/F--
	<u>Departures</u> – ...we could work together to formulate a vocabulary for circle time...	
	<u>Development</u> – ...let's work together to develop an effective vocabulary for circle time...	
	<u>Diexis and Delineation</u> - ...we have lots of ideas that work for us but how do we share them with colleagues...	C+/F-
	<u>Deliberation</u> - ...we need to organize our ideas, make sure activities work with pupils ...then we can share them.	C-/F-
	<u>Departure</u> – ...we can structure the materials into a scheme of work...	C-/F--
	<u>Development</u> – ...let's show the scheme of work to colleagues from Region1 and nationally.	C-/F--

The work established that group activities provided ideal opportunities for teaching and assessing oracy development but also for structured work to support aspects of personal and social development. This was recognised to be particularly difficult for children in local authority Welsh-medium schools who were generally being taught in a language other than their mother tongue.

'Although we are a natural Welsh school we have not got one home where they speak Welsh.' (SENCo4)

The oracy project emerged as work to develop a resource to support children's development of the vocabulary and grammar they need to communicate effectively in

the Welsh language. It was also recognised that the scheme could be used to provide structured interventions to promote for social interaction and as a context to develop and practice social communication skills.

'We have been discussing what we need in schools resources, the oracy scheme work is like an umbrella and under that there are lots of other things like teaching children to listen, to look, everything that goes with learning really, how can we improve the children's learning in school?' (SENCo1).

Team work included trialling the emerging resource to ensure that it was intelligible and effective. It also provided opportunities to develop practice across schools.

'And then as far as the Oracy Scheme is concerned, we are now doing that throughout the school. Nobody was doing that and it is really great because the children really love it and we are using it to go alongside the language scheme. And instead of having them sitting doing the scheme now they do things round the circle and it's helping with all sorts of things – like the weather (vocabulary) because we have to do it on the yard because there is not enough room to do in the cabin!' (SENCo 4)

The benefits which ensued from trialling and implementing the scheme in this school was recognised by the senior management of the school and inspectors

'Doing the circle time work was great. HT4 could see its value and wanted it to be featured in the inspection. He could see the value of it across the curriculum for teaching skills like listening, good sitting and taking turns, and the inspectors liked it too. In the report they used the word 'exceptional' (SENCo4)

The value of the material was also recognised by regional partners invited to observe the scheme in action.

'I came away from the visit, having seen the scheme in action thoroughly convinced that it should be available to schools throughout Wales! It would be great if it were possible to have a DVD recording of the work – being able to see the scheme in practice would surely be appreciated by teachers'. (Regional Partner, Learning Development Advisory Teacher)

When members of the team mounted an exhibition of the scheme for delegates at a national conference for practitioners working in Welsh for children with additional learning needs they reported that they had expressed high levels of interest in the materials.

'I did explain about the background to Oracy Scheme, and I said please come to our table this afternoon we have got an exhibition and we will show everything to you. And to be fair everyone came and had a look, we were really busy.' (SENCo1)

8.6.2 Object 2.ii Reviewing published literacy resources

Activity oriented towards Object 2.ii reflected team's work to share information about effective practice. This included team member accounts of resources and approaches they use to meet the needs of learners in their settings. This work built

on earlier discourse in which possibilities for team working to develop resources to meet the needs were identified. This discussion, which took place in Meeting 3, included a systematic review of existing materials and their strengths and limitations. For instance the team considered a reading scheme that is widely used which had been translated from English-medium materials.

*'The books have been structured on the developmental pattern for English – a lot of research has gone into that, but the two languages don't follow parallel paths'.
(SENCo4)*

Further to this the team went on to consider and determine general principles about the nature of the difficulties – delineation, and to agree the key features necessary of successful resources which were not currently available.

Object 2ii: Reviewing published literacy resources	D' analysis strands	C/F
<p>Reviewing published literacy resources</p> <p>Analysis of strengths and limitations, developing a rationale for materials to support early literacy development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing available materials, strengths and limitations • Comparative analyses of English-medium resources • Consideration of what Welsh-medium structured texts and what should be included. • Consideration of Welsh language phonic structure; • development of a rationale to inform decision making about a structure for Welsh Language early reading texts. 	<p><u>Diexis</u> – ... few books, old books, unsuitable books ... how can we teach and learners learn...?</p> <p><u>Delineation</u> – ...we know what works and what doesn't work...</p> <p><u>Deliberation</u> – ...why doesn't someone write the books we would like to use with learners...?</p> <p><u>Departures</u> – ...we know what is needed, why can't we write some books for learners?</p> <p><u>Development</u> – ...we should try writing some books and see what happens...</p>	<p>C/F</p> <p>F++</p> <p>F-</p> <p>F--</p>

Meeting 3: excerpt - part 1

- EP: so I wonder what did you think of the table where I tried to make a record of all that we had decided last time Did it make sense, was it useful? I thought that it might be helpful to think of it in terms of 'past', 'present' and 'future'. So, what is our starting point, the 'past' - where have we come from?
- SENCo1: From having no ...
- SENCo2 ... shortage of resources...
- SENCo1: ... no resources and reading books for children...
- SENCo5: What we have is old fashioned.
- SNT1 They don't develop in graduated steps, the first book is ok but then, whew ! They are not well graded ...
- SENCo1: ... they start off ok but then they get too hard too fast
- SENCo3: Lots of them use forms from the South (of Wales)
- SENCo5 They are not attractive, they are not colourful or ...
- SNT1 ... so old fashioned.
- EP OK, what else?
- SENCo1 When they have been translated from the English they are just not appropriate ...
- EP ... ok, and so that effects the phonics used ... is that what it is?
- SENCo1: No it is just ... the vocabulary is just too hard. (Reading Scheme) is not structured phonetically in the English, so it is not that. No it is that the vocabulary is too hard...
- SNT1 ...yes ... it is that the language is too formal ...
- SENCo1: there are a lot of long words in it ...
- SENCo2: like the one called 'allwedd hud' – (magic key) ...children wouldn't know that, we wouldn't use the word 'allwedd' (key) it would be 'agoriad'
- SNT1 It is the words they have chosen to use, rather than that they are difficult words ...as if somebody pretty pedantic has done the translation rather than someone who is thinking about the children who are going to be reading them.
- EP so they are looking to do something that is 'correct' (grammatically accurate), rather than using the language that people use each day, and looking at it from the perspective of the children learning to read?
- SENCo3 The thing is that if someone was going to write a story in Welsh they would write one using simple forms that go with good pictures. But if you are translating a story from the English that Welsh becomes long winded. There is no short way when you do it like that.

Meeting 3: Excerpt - part 2

- SENCo1 That is absolutely it, and the thing is that the children do not use that formal language...
- SENCo3 ...it isn't the kind of Welsh that school children use. It is as if they are using language which is too correct that (children) wouldn't know or use, because in a lot of schools there is some sort of 'Playground Welsh' which is used on the playground, that belongs to the children. It isn't correct and you don't want it but you have to keep (things) a bit more simple for the children, more than is correct in literary terms.
- EP So what sort of Welsh are we talking about ...
- SENCo2 ... it is too formal ... complex ...
- EP Ok, so that is good – there is a lot in that. Now, do we want to look at the 'future' or is there more to say about the 'present'?
- SENCo1 Well there isn't much to say ... about the 'present' ...
- EP That is what we are going to do....
- SENCo1 Well there are one or two things, like the (recent Dyslexia) resources. There are people doing (that), but then we have looked at them and they are too complex again because of the graduation which is still not appropriate.
- SNT1 Yes you buy the whole set but you can't use the whole set, you can only use the first few ...
- SENCo1 ... because the rest get too hard too fast ...
- EP: OK, so what about us? In the 'present', what are we doing?
- SENCo5 Well we want to do some things that will lead to the 'future'.
- EP That is exactly what I meant. So in the 'future' what we would like to have?
- SENCo5 A series of books which are appropriate, colourful ...
- SENCo1 ...no we don't just want one ... we want several ...
- SENCo2 ...funny ...
- EP ...so it needs to be, colourful, funny, appropriate ...
- SENCo1 :the right vocabulary, appropriate phonetic structure ...
- SNT1 ...with resources - CD ROMs, worksheets, vocabulary, tapes, games, computer games ...
- SENCo1having been written in Welsh not translated ...
- SNT1 ... and a lot of them.
- SENCo1 Yes, absolutely. A lot of books on each level and on all of the levels to reinforce learning so that children can achieve success.

The team's discourse is reported in full in the extended excerpt to highlight the distributed nature of the thinking processes and the ways in which the explicit mediation provided by Change Laboratory frameworks structured the discourse and mirror data provided a context in which issue could be considered. Discursive action in this excerpt above builds on 'departure' and 'development' discussions from Meeting 2 detailed in the extended excerpt featured in Chapter 7. At that time the possibility of writing reading texts to meet the needs of the children they teach was mooted. The discussion above clarified team understandings of what was missing and what was needed and paved the way for Object 2.iii which would be to develop literacy resources which meet the needs of children learning through the medium of Welsh.

As in the previous excerpt ideas about beneficial characteristics or limitations of resources were articulated with confidence, whereas ideas of what the team might and could do are expressed more tentatively. The excerpt illustrated how team members confidently and effectively evaluated existing resources and articulated the characteristics of more effective resources. Nevertheless undertaking the development of resources represented a radical transformation of team perceptions of the possibilities for its role. This transformation was motivated by the imperative to meet the needs of the learners and was mediated by shared team activity.

'From the point of view of working on the books - I have never had the opportunity to do anything, any project like this before and I feel that it is very new experience. I think that we are the ones who are working with the children every day. We know exactly where the gaps are. I'm not saying that we have made the perfect resource for them but there is definitely a gap in the market. And we are trying to work on it on their level. There's never been reading material for them. At the end of the day our intention is creating resources for children who, usually, maybe in the past, there has been nothing'. (SNT2)

8.6.3 Object 2.iii Developing resources - literacy

As I described above, activity oriented towards the third strand in Object 2 emerged from Object 2.ii. This provides an illustration of how 'departure' and 'development' contributions from earlier work formed the necessary platform for further activity at this stage and, therefore can be characterised as 'deixis' and 'delineation' contributions in activity oriented towards this object.

'So I am trying to get a structure - now don't laugh! So there are these ideas for reading books, and so I thought if I could do that. But it is impossible, I don't know enough about phonics. But, what if...? (SENCo1)

'The thing is that if someone was going to write a story in Welsh they would write one using simple forms that go with good pictures. But if you are translating a story from the English that Welsh becomes long winded. There is no short way when you do it like that'. (SENCo3)

Such discursive action clarified the principles which would be adopted in the development of a series of early reading texts for learners.

In addition, activity oriented towards Object 2.iii expanded as a result of the emerging outcomes. When team members evaluated the emerging resources in their own practice they found them to be useful in provision to meet the needs of learners. For instance the resources provided the beginnings of a highly structured scheme for use with children with literacy difficulties.

'They do work and I know that. I can see that now with the children just with the 12 we have been using. I would be lost without them now because there are some books that I have got are too high a level for the children I am thinking of'. (SNT2)

Presentations of the resources to regional and national colleagues also brought positive feedback from practitioners who could see the potential in the structure.

'It was good to go there knowing that we had something concrete to show these teachers, that we had something good to report back. Because often you go and listen to other people talking and you think it would be nice to have something to talk about, but everyone who was there that saw the books thought that they were great and they wanted us to carry on with the work and were eager to have a set of the books we are going to make now. Yes, it was lovely to have that reaction. We were feeling quite like stars really'. (SENCo2)

Such work also offered opportunities to develop the texts for use in a digital format.

I am hoping that there will be the resources on the internet, coming on line too. Because that is another medium that is great for children that need a bit of extra inspiration with reading, they get the ICT element too and also more visual approaches, and kinaesthetic. Because it can get monotonous for them, reading the same old thing. For instance (Child) hasn't moved forward from the book but he isn't complaining, he is quite happy to look at the book again in a different medium on the computer'. (SNT2)

Object 2iii: Developing resources: literacy	'D' analysis strands	C/F
<p>Team experience frustration that the lack of appropriate reading materials available to support learners experiencing difficulties.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider structures: phonic and visual aspects of the texts – stories within the picture, humour. Develop and refine characters, families, pets for the texts. Develop strategies for working as a team and in smaller groups to develop texts. Develop 12 early texts with ideas for illustrations, review texts, characters etc. trial with learners and adjust. Liaise with LA for funding and reprographics to produce a set of 12 to share locally, regionally and nationally – delegation to national Welsh-medium additional needs conference. Liaise with national body to mount animated versions of texts on the internet, consider implications of this and implement decisions. Liaise with national commissioner - needs identification panel – delegation to present proposed structured scheme. National commissioner project specification for 50 books, fits well with team's proposed structure, team approach a number of publishers re possibilities of joint working. Team agreement to work with Publisher1 to tender for project using team's structure for structured reading texts. Winning the tender to develop a pack of 50 early reading texts. Joint work with Publisher1 to develop 50 texts, liaison with illustrators and monitoring bodies. 	<p><u>Diexis</u> – ...we have an idea for some reading books which may help our children learn to read...</p> <p><u>Delineation</u> – ...the books need to be ...</p> <p><u>Deliberation</u> – ...the books could focus on ... with ...and ...</p> <p><u>Departures and Development</u> – ...let's write a small number of books, try them with learners, invite evaluations from peers and bodies involved in publishing...</p>	<p>C-/F-</p> <p>C-/F-</p>

In due course the team were also able to make a joint tender with Publisher1 to a national commissioning body for funding to produce a scheme of 50 early reading books based on the structure which had been developed.

'There is just a sense of pride. This is us and we are making a difference for the children, and hopefully we are working for the Welsh language too'. (SENCo1)

8.7 EMERGING OBJECT A - FUNDING

Funding was required for school to release team members to attend the meetings and obtaining such funds was problematic at every stage of the study. Accordingly, activity to resolve funding problems emerged as a significant object, 'Emerging Object A – Funding'.

Emerging Object A: funding the team's work	'D' analysis strands	C/F
<p>Building momentum – team seek additional funding to for more frequent meetings + self directed project work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Authority agree to continue to fund 1 meeting/term • Approaches to Welsh Assembly Government officers • Application to General Teaching Council(Wales) (GTCW) <p>Meeting with Welsh Assembly Government officer <u>Constraint</u> - team to work regionally to access funds Regional working – liaison with Regional partners <u>Benefit</u> - for Oracy project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • opportunity to expose work for peer review • very positive feedback • access to expert feedback (not available in our team) on structure, use of language and accessibility of the whole scheme <p><u>Benefits</u> – for team's work in general</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • re Team / EPS liaison – presentation to regional EPs in NE Wales: opportunity for further feedback <p>Applying for GTCW funding – <u>Constraint 1</u> - funding year ≠ academic year → funding shortfall – risk / uncertainty <u>Unforeseen benefit</u> – team develop resiliency</p> <p><u>Constraint 2</u> - strict rules for supply cover not conducive to PT workers (i.e. many of the team) <u>Benefit</u> – headteachers come on board - recognising the benefit of teamwork to practitioner and to school make the commitment to release without supply staff where possible.</p> <p><u>Constraint 3</u> - reporting requirements – raised team member anxieties <u>Benefit</u> - requirements less demanding than anticipated – reassurance for team</p> <p>Working National Grid for Learning (Wales) (NCfLW) – re animation of team's books. Income generation <u>Benefit</u> – secure funding for 2008/9. <u>Constraint</u> - funding hiccups – delays – changing conditions of funding.</p> <p>Working National Commissioning Body and Publisher1 Development and publication of reading texts Income generation <u>Benefit</u> – secure further funding <u>Constraint</u> – negotiating contractual issues - delays.</p>	<p><u>Diexis</u> – ...we have LA funding to meet as a group...</p> <p><u>Delineation</u> – ...we can do ... with the funding we have... how can we attract more so that we can do more...?</p> <p><u>Deliberation</u> – ...lets use an 'off the peg' funding source available for teacher groups...</p> <p><u>Departures</u> – ...let's look for funding tailored to our needs...</p> <p><u>Development1</u> – ...people who want to work with us will be able to contribute to our funding needs...</p> <p><u>Development2</u> – ...our work can be a source of income generation ...we can use it to fund future work...</p>	<p>C⁺/F⁻</p> <p>C⁻/F⁻</p> <p>C⁺⁺/F⁺⁺</p>

Whilst the authority agreed to maintain existing levels which provided cover for one meeting each term, they were not able to offer any further financial support. At the outset of the work the team's marginal position limited their opportunities to attract the funding necessary for the work from the local authority and officers encouraged the team to explore alternative sources of funding.

I am delighted that the group took up the challenge I set them when we met a couple of years ago. In taking ownership of a perceived issue, they have come together extremely well as a group and have produced a set of excellent resource material.
(LA Chief Learning and Achievement Officer)

Funding from the General Teaching Council (Wales) was available but did not fully meet the team's needs. The team's bid for funding to that body was successful but a shortfall in funding occurred because the study's time frame straddled two financial years. Moreover, the constraints imposed had significant implications for part time workers who could not claim for cover if meetings were held at times outside their working week.

Alternative sources of funding emerged in due course as a result of national networking. Ultimately this presented opportunities for joint work to publish the team's resources and income generation which could, in turn, be used to sustain the team's work in the future. For instance contacts were formed with an officer with responsibility for Special Educational Needs in the Welsh Assembly Government.

'And that is a complete turnaround from what was happening last year, but you know that this is just the start. Ok 2 years ago we didn't get any (financial support from the local authority) and we were disappointed. But by now we have proved ourselves, and we have enough confidence to say, 'well this is what we want'. (SENCo1)

8.8 EMERGING OBJECT B – PRACTITIONER DEVELOPMENT

Activity oriented towards 'Emerging Object B – Practitioner Development' includes transformations for the professional identity of the team collectively and individually. This had come about in the course of work to develop resources for Welsh-medium learners, especially those with additional learning needs. Over the course of the study the team's perspectives about their professional identity would be transformed.

Initial feelings of powerlessness and of needing support from the local authority were set aside in work to generate resources to meet the needs of learners and their own needs as practitioners within Welsh-medium education. Activity in this Object developed from being highly controlled (F⁺⁺) by the local authority and as a result of conditions imposed by external bodies. However, over the course of the study the team became more able to determine their responses to the circumstances of their practice and increasingly able to frame their own professional development.

Emerging Object B: Practitioner Development	'D' analysis strands	C/F
<p>The team was formed by local authority officer as a way to continue authority wide work to support geographically separate and culturally distinct schools to work together.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local authority (LA) funding to meet to follow LA agenda Team identify practice needs of their own and express a desire to work together to develop practice to meet these needs – LA supportive of this development. Team develop developmental project work approach to meet self identified needs using processes developed within the team that suit the needs of the team. Team begin to share work to officers within LA, colleagues regionally and officers and colleagues nationally. Team and team members engage in developmental projects with national and commercial groups. 	<p><u>Diexis</u> – ...here is a project we could work on ...would that be ok...?</p> <p><u>Delineation</u> – ...how can we work together on this project...?</p> <p><u>Deliberation</u> – ...here are some other projects we could work on...</p> <p><u>Departures</u> – ...other people may be interested in what we are doing...</p> <p><u>Development</u> – ...we can work with national and commercial groups who have expressed an interest, to develop our projects...</p>	<p>F++ /C++</p> <p>F+/C++</p> <p>F-/C++</p> <p>F-/C++</p> <p>F- /C-</p> <p>F- /C-</p>

In the context of a supportive team, confidence and resilience developed which emboldened the team to embark on the series of meetings prior to obtaining full funding, and to widen their networks regionally and nationally in order to publicise their work.

'Being in the team is a great experience. It is so supportive, and there is a consistency to it, no mood swings. It's the best team I have been in all my 30 years of being a teacher. The team is something positive when things are tough. It is dependable, stable and provides social links – especially at difficult times'. (SENCo4)

The changes for the team and the benefits of the emerging outcomes both for the team and for others were recognised within the local authority and nationally.

'The team have gained confidence in their schools and with the wider group of schools because they are seen to be people who can come together and achieve something worthwhile. Team links with (regional) learning development team have meant that other agencies and other authorities have been pulled in and seen the work and been impressed by it. That has obviously been good for (Local Authority) by showboating good practice regionally and across all Wales. For instance Welsh Assembly Government have taken note of the project. Locally, regionally and nationally it's has provided really good feedback for (Local Authority) and shown that we can be innovative and develop good practice and resources that have got national standing'. (Local Authority Inclusion Officer)

'(I) have seen real positive responses to (the team) developing work in the National context and feel that this enhances self esteem and develops greater confidence – with a knock on effect on motivation'. (National Commissioning Officer)

8.9 EMERGING OBJECT C: KNOWING HOW TO KNOW OTHERS

Activity oriented towards Emerging Object C was geared towards the team's collective relationships with others and the contexts in which these relationships changed and developed over time. Of particular interest to the present study are the changes that have occurred to issues of 'classification', that is the degree to which the team was separated from other practitioners. Initially, because of the team's marginal position, levels of 'classification' were strong even within local authority contexts.

As earlier accounts have highlighted the initial impetus to engage with other practitioners working through the medium of Welsh was imposed as part of the conditions relating to the team's request for funding. This had caused some initial consternation among team members who expressed concern that it might compromise the team's independence.

'We are inclusive aren't we? But one of things that we do worry about is that the group will get too big and maybe we don't want it to be too big. There was talk one time when we were working with the team from (Regional Partner) that they might like to join us and we felt rather, No it is us that have made this, it is ours, this is us, this is our work and we don't want to bring a big group of people into it'. (SENCo2)

Further consideration helped to put the risks into perspective and to highlight the potential of such networking.

'We wouldn't always be working with these other people, wouldn't we just go to them and show them what we are doing and then maybe they can give us some ideas (and) when it is published they can use it in their schools because it is no good us just doing this work and keeping it for ourselves'. (SENCo5)

As the study progressed the impetus for networking emerged from the team's desire to share the work with other practitioners and to obtain feedback from them.

8.9.1 Emerging Object C.i: Knowing how to know others – locally

Activity oriented towards Emerging Object Ci built on earlier Local Authority initiatives to allow Welsh-medium practitioners to work together in ways to compensate for the limitations in available resources for practice for children with special educational needs.

(The team) has given the opportunity for SENCos and Special Needs Support Teachers to come together with the Educational Psychologist to share information, expertise and good practice in an area where there has been a perceived gap in terms of resources for Welsh-medium special educational needs and support

materials for that. It has been a great trigger to bring professionals together to focus their expertise together for the benefit for the issue. Although we have brought Welsh-medium SENCos together before, we have not been clear about the outcome. This (work) has provided a focus and an end product'. (Local Authority Inclusion Officer)

Emerging Object C.i: Knowing how to know others - locally	'D' analysis strands	C/F
<p>The team came into being as a result of an LA initiative to extend support Welsh-medium practitioners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LA initiative to provide opportunities for practitioners supporting pupils with additional learning needs to work together and share LA provided training opportunities. Team members discuss their interest in working on a self identified project – LA support for termly ½ day meetings. The team experience frustration at the slow pace of progress and are keen to meet more regularly – approach LA for additional funding. LA offer advice about alternative sources of funding but although willing to continue funding at existing level are not able to provide more financial support. LA officers take a close interest in team's work but allow team autonomy to plan and manage the team's work. LA officers and staff act as interface to Welsh Assembly Government officers and regional staff e.g. introductions, facilitating funding arrangements. LA continues to support team and team members e.g. occasional funding, providing opportunities to present work to wider audiences. LA recognition of value of teams work as income generation. 	<p><u>Diexis</u> – ...LA managers want to support the team by....</p> <p><u>Delineation and Deliberation</u> – ...we can share our ideas for team working with the LA managers...</p> <p><u>Departures</u> – ...the LA are supportive of our work on the ... project...</p> <p><u>Development</u> – ...the LA are supportive of our work on developmental projects.</p>	<p>C+/F++</p> <p>C-/F+</p> <p>C-/F-</p> <p>C-/F--</p>

Local Authority officers took a strong interest in the work of the team and the emerging outcomes of its work. They were keen to maintain existing levels of financial support and to offer advice and guidance.

'When I initially challenged the group to produce their own resources and to facilitate their work via GTCW grants, etc. I was greeted with some scepticism. It is wonderful to see that they accepted that challenge so professionally and with such far-reaching consequences!' (Local Authority Chief Officer)

As the value of the team's work became more widely recognised in school and in the local authority additional levels of informal support was provided by head teacher

colleagues who became increasingly willing to support the team by providing venues for regional liaison and in releasing staff to attend meetings.

'I think that everyone in the schools has been supportive. HT5i was supportive here and HT5ii is just as supportive. I don't think that I have seen any difficulties at all and from what I understand people like the officers in the LA have been very supportive, just so long as we don't ask for extra money!... I think there are a lot of people ... you know like Chief Officer ... who think that the team is his baby, but still I think that everyone has been quite supportive'. (SENC05)

8.9.2 Emerging object C.ii Knowing how to know others – regionally

Activity in Emerging Object C.ii emerged at the request of Welsh Assembly Government officers where policy emphasises regional working practices.

Emerging Object C.ii: Knowing how to know others - regionally	'D' analysis strands	C/F
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impetus for working regionally emerged as a result of the search for additional funding – see Emerging Object A. • Funding was only available for regional working – a hoop for the team to jump through. • Team make contact with regional partners regarding possibilities for joint work. • A program for joint work was agreed and implemented – relating to Oracy project – opportunity for peer review + source of additional support review of scheme and editing of draft document. • Opportunity to present the team's work to EPS services from across NE Wales. 	<p><u>Diexis</u> – ...funding is only available for regional projects - we must jump through this hoop to apply for funds from them...</p> <p><u>Delineation</u> – ...there are benefits and problems associated with regional working, for instance ...</p> <p><u>Deliberation</u> – ...how can we work regionally without compromising our way of working together...?</p> <p><u>Departures</u> – ...we could work with regional colleagues by ... and still maintain our team identity...</p> <p><u>Development</u> – ...let's share ... with regional colleagues...</p>	<p>C-/F++</p> <p>C-/F+</p> <p>C-/F-</p> <p>C-/F--</p>

8.9.3 Emerging object C.iii Knowing how to know others - nationally

Activity in Emerging Object C.iii initially emerged in the search for funds to meet a funding shortfall resulting from General Teaching Council (Wales) processes where liaison with Welsh Assembly Government Officers was facilitated by introductions from local authority colleagues.

However, as described above, the team sought wider involvement with others in national contexts for opportunities to share its work and to gather feedback. For example when addressing delegates at a national conference:

'I just explained the background, (how) we have got tired of everyone complaining that there weren't any resources, that there were no resources and that we had decided to do something about it in the hope that we would be heard'. (SENCo1)

Object C. iii: Knowing how to know others – nationally	'D' analysis strands	C/F
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team approaches to officers meet with generally positive responses. • Team approaches for funding are heard but conditions generally not favourable for funding. • Team shares work at a national conference – high levels of interest from fellow practitioners and also from some national officers. • National Grid for Learning officers approach team to include team's work on the national grid • Representatives of the team attend national commissioner 'needs Identification' meeting, a panel to consider possible projects for commissioning and present the rationale for both Literacy and Oracy projects to the panel. • National commissioner's project specification adopts the principles of the team's rationale for literacy project – call for tender. • Team approach a number of publishers re the literacy project – high level of interest expressed. • Team agree for the literacy project to form the basis of a publisher's tender for the WAG project. • Team work together with Publisher1 to produce a pack of 50 early structured reading texts for children - completed September 2010 with publication to follow. • Team aim to work with Publisher1 to launch pack of reading texts at National Cultural Event held in Local Authority in August 2011. 	<p><u>Delineation</u> – ...there are benefits and problems associated with national working...</p> <p><u>Deliberation</u> – ...how can we work nationally without compromising our way of working together...?</p> <p><u>Departures</u> – ...we could work with national colleagues by ... and still maintain our team identity...</p> <p><u>Development</u> – ...let's work with national colleagues...</p>	<p>C+/F+</p> <p>C-/F+</p> <p>C-/F-</p>

8.10 OBJECT ORIENTED ACTIVITY IN THE PRESENT STUDY

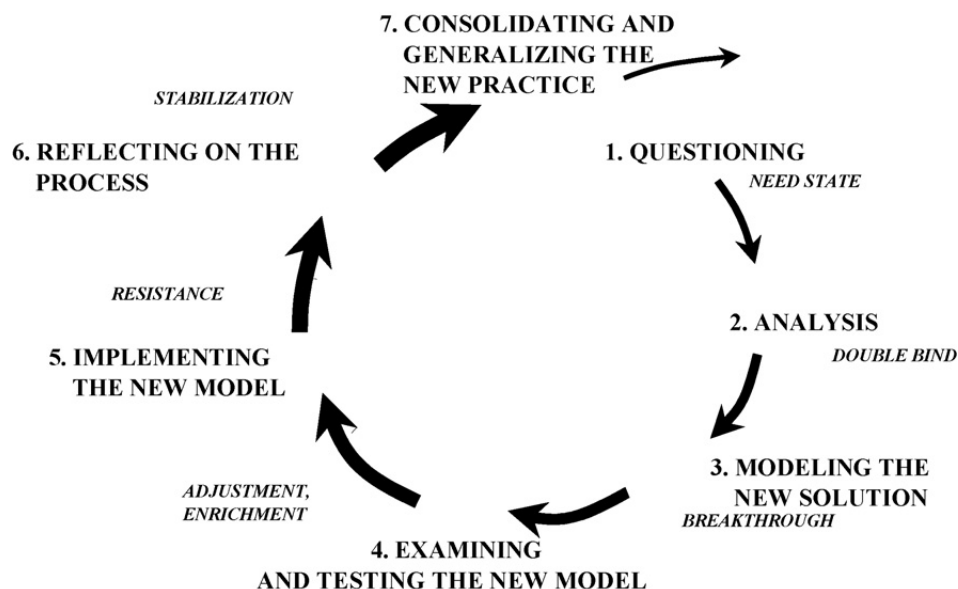
In this chapter my account has charted ways in which object oriented activity contributed to outcomes for practice and for practitioners, for the team and their own practice and for practice more widely within Welsh-medium education. I have also provided an account of how object oriented activity engendered positive outcomes for the team collectively and individually to strengthen a marginal position. Professional development which included reconstructions of perspectives relating to professional identity not only collectively and individually within the team, but which was also viewed as having implications for perceptions of the local authority.

'On local, regional and national levels it's has provided really good feedback for (Local Authority) and shown that (Local Authority) can be innovative and develop good practice and resources that have got national standing.' (Local Authority Inclusion Officer)

9: THE TEAM, ITS WORK AND DIVISION OF LABOUR

Throughout this thesis my discussion has emphasised the ways in which object oriented activity was built upon developing team processes. Changes for practice came about as a result of effective working relationships where development also occurred both for the team as a whole and also for individual team members. Engeström and Sannino's (2010) cycle of Expansive Learning provides a framework for considerations of the distributed thinking taking place in team processes which emphasised the interplay between individual team member perspectives and those of the team as a whole.

Figure 9.1: Sequence of learning actions in an expansive learning cycle
(Engeström and Sannino 2010, p.8)



In particular, the Expansive Learning Cycle emphasises the importance of individual questioning, the 'D' analysis strand 'Dixis' in which questions and contradictions externalised by individuals were shared consideration and collective activity.

9.1 THE TEAM AND DISTRIBUTED WORKING AND LEARNING - INDIVIDUAL STRENGTHS AND NEEDS

Team member perspectives about of the value of the team and of team processes developed over the course of the study. At the outset team members viewed the team simply as a place to discuss practice and share information.

'What I knew was that we were a group of Welsh SENCoS. We just met to deal with matters which were important to us as Welsh-medium primary schools. It was (work) using other people's resources. That what it was in the beginning because the object wasn't to create resources when we started.' (SENCo5)

Discursive action formed the team's main approach to object oriented activity. Discussions provided vital channels for joint working, where listening was recognised as being as important as speaking. Solutions to problems were generated as outcomes of whole team approaches, in which ideas were externalised and shared, and where responses were often distributed among more than one member of the team.

'I think that we do listen (to each other). I think that we have good ideas (and a) lot of common sense. It is a real team effort. When you hit the wall and you've just got to sort it ... somebody or everybody seems to overcome the problem and the solutions are found by somebody or other'. (SNT1)

The team also developed strategies to respond to tasks which were facilitated by dividing into smaller groups before being reviewed by the team as a whole.

'I think that we co-operate very well, (for instance) dividing up into groups when we are writing'. (SNT1)

We don't have to share out the jobs out, do we? (No-one) says 'you do this, you do that'. Everybody just says 'I'll do that, I'll do that'. (SENC05)

Team members recognised that the team's development built on the efforts of individuals who contributed in ways that reflected their individual strengths. Comments highlighted how these complement one another.

'As a group we each have our different strengths. One thing I don't understand much is money, funding etc and obviously I don't need to worry about it because other people in the group can do that. So I think that we have achieved that as a group, it's not just that we are using our strengths to support the group also by reducing the worry for the rest of us. We can put our faith in our co-workers and they can (have faith in the things) we take over too'. (SENC01)

Team members also expressed how individual differences have provided opportunities for individual team member development as well as for the team as a whole. Comments reflected how opportunities to learn from colleagues with different strengths are valued and that through participating in team based object activity they begin to explore previously less developed potential of their own.

'I feel that everybody has a different way of thinking about things, for instance personally I am not very creative - as far as work is concerned I am very 'plain Jane'. But everyone else has come together to work creatively and it has helped me to feel stronger in my creativity'. (SENC02)

'I feel that I have learned a lot more about how children read and the things that can be done (to support them)'. (SENC01)

In addition, team members recognised that the work of the team was not confined within the timeframes of the monthly meetings and that important work took place in

practice. For instance, team members would trial emerging materials with pupils within their settings.

'We are doing this work in our schools. Then we are coming back (to the team) to say when things don't work. That is the difference because we take the work back to our schools to see if they are appropriate to see if they work'. (SENCo4)

The team placed an equal importance on work to share the resources with other practitioners within their settings and elsewhere, and also in seeking the views of colleagues.

'Sharing the experience, taking the ideas and putting them into practice at school and passing them on to other teachers, the discussions you have with them. It is as if we come to the meeting and talk and then we go to school and talk about it'. (SENCo2)

Team members agreed that the team offers a forum which is stimulating and supportive for them as individuals, as a team and in team processes.

'You know it is a real team effort. We don't seem to flag at all which amazes me. We are looking forward to the next meeting and the next meeting. The meetings just carry us along, don't they? It is always moving forwards, isn't it?' (SNT1)

Team member contributions stressed that an important feature of the team's work lies in the development and maintenance of the team, and expressed the view that all other activity is founded on this.

'The forum underpins everything. In a way other outcomes are incidental. This is only a starting place. (It) is going to be like a pyramid because this will then have an effect on something else. (SENCo1)

9.1.1 The team - multiple purposes, multiple contexts and multiple roles

Practitioner reviews of the team, team working and its value to them as individuals highlighted the multiple roles fulfilled over and above its primary developmental project work focus. For instance team members reported that they value team meetings as a forum for sharing problems relating to general and specific issues of practice, and the opportunities presented in role team discussions for exploring possibilities and problem solving.

'I feel that the moment that you raise a point someone else is sure to agree or, you know they too have the same problems. There are a lot of things that are similar'. (SNT2)

Some practitioners also valued the team as a source of new information.

'I am accessing information that I have never come across before, none of us at (our) school had ever heard of (resource)'. (SENCo4)

In addition team members, recalling past feelings of being marginalised, reported valuing the sense of being a member of a strong team as opposed to being in a minority particularly when compared to SENCos working in the English sector.

‘...there are so many of them compared to us and I have always felt that we are a sort of minority, like a ethnic minority in a way (but) we are now having our time’. (SENCo5)

Team discussions also uncovered further degrees of isolation, for instance of practitioners from the authority’s two bilingual schools had not been included in the original project. This was expressed as a sense of having been ‘excluded’.

‘What I thought was interesting was that diagram of all the schools feeding in together and (our two schools) were out on their own. How did that happen? Why weren’t we included? Was there an idea or a reason why that happened? I’m not saying that it was intentional but unintentional, that people hadn’t thought. But the effect of that was that no one came out here to bring us in’. (SENCo4)

Interviews with team members highlighted their awareness that changes for the team had occurred which had emerged as a result of joint working and distributed processes. These had included noticing and contrasting the present team’s ways of working with forms of group activity in the past.

‘There is a sense of belonging I suppose in the group but why we have had that now and we didn’t have it before, that is the point isn’t it?’ (SENCo1)

Team members speculated about the affective nature of the tools which supported the team’s work. They expressed curiosity about why the experience of belonging to the present team differed from membership of other teams in the past, and how the relationships which had developed with the team were experienced as qualitatively different from relationships in other groups.

‘I have been on other working parties. So it is not about knowing people because I knew one or two people on the other working parties but somehow we weren’t coming from the same place even though the interest was there. There wasn’t the same spark, there wasn’t the same bouncing off one another, even though people argued points and people had ideas and people did disagree. The purpose was the same in all of these discussions, so maybe the reasons are more emotional’. (SENCo1)

The view that the research process had been instrumental in the work was also expressed by some team members, including perceptions that in my researcher role I had contributed to the changes that had occurred and to the development of the team.

‘We all had this common vision and you were part of that ... the group had already been established to a certain extent but we needed you. That was part of it, we would have gone nowhere without you. I feel that quite strongly’. (SNT1)

‘...and really you were the catalyst in a way, there has to be a catalyst to make something happen. Because before you came no-one could speak Welsh as an Ed Psych so all the meetings had been was just to do with whatever the authority said, in

English, to make it easier for us in Welsh. We were just there to support one another on a very superficial level. It was great but nothing happened did it?’ (SENCo1)

The distribution of labour within the team can be understood to include specific roles assumed by individual members of the team. These included:

- Innovators – generators of ideas;
- Team Experts which relate to individual areas of strength e.g. literacy, music, phonics, oracy development, small school issues, bilingual school issues;
- Questioners – members who maintained a critical perspective;
- Administrators – an evolving role for the co-ordination of work relating to funding; and
- Resource Testers – members who conducted trials of emerging materials in their settings.

However, whilst these roles tended to be distinct, in practice they were often shared between more than one of the members of the team and individual team members might undertake responsibility for more than one such role. The fluid distribution of multiple roles across multiple team members was a key feature of the team’s work.

In addition to the specific roles listed above, team members assumed multiple shared roles in team discussions as speakers and listeners, in creative dynamic interactions to generate developmental projects, in object oriented discursive activity, and in distributed thinking and learning.

9.2 RESEARCHER PERSPECTIVES:

MULTIPLE ROLES IN DEVELOPMENTAL PROJECT WORK AND THE RESEARCH PROCESS

Team member comments highlighted how much they valued the democratic processes adopted in the work together which was felt to form an effective approach to teamwork.

No, no-one is managing us, we are all equal. No one does what I experienced this morning, someone giving a lecture, someone at the front saying right this is this, this is that, here is video – watch the video, are there any questions? It is nothing like that it is a lot more informal and that is how it gets the best out of us because we all enjoy coming’. (SENCo5)

Team member comments highlighted the value of dynamic interactions within the team in which individual contributions are considered by all and where consensus is sought and decisions are taken jointly based on resolutions emerging through the team’s discursive activity.

'I wouldn't say that we have a group leader, someone (who) says you do that and you to that. People offer, don't they. It is as if people show us different paths but then it is then up to the group to decide which path to follow'. (SENCo3)

At the outset of the study my intention had been to participate within the team as an equal member and, with the consent of other team members, to conduct the research as a case study of the team's work during a single academic year. Research processes would draw on the multiple roles undertaken as part of day to day work as the link Educational Psychologist to Welsh-medium and bilingual schools in the local authority, and also as a Local Authority worker. Importantly the researcher role was combined with work as an individual member of the team. It would also include the Systems' Minder role (Glenny, 2005). In practice the researcher role would be multidimensional as illustrated in Figure 9.2 below.

Figure 9.2 Researcher roles in the present study



However, inevitably the research had implications for team processes. I have described how this has included the institution of more frequent meetings, the introduction of the adapted change laboratory set up, and the use of the Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) model as an explicit tool, for review, reflection and problem solving as in Vygotsky's notion of 'dual stimulation' (1978).

At the heart of the rationale adopted by the team at the outset of developmental project working, lay notions of the team as a forum not only for discussion and

planning, but also for undertaking joint work on projects to address issues relating to practice. Because of this, team meetings included; not only time to share news, to provide updates, to consider the implications of developments, and take decisions about the team's responses to them; but also included the completion of tasks in work which would have been identified and planned in earlier meetings. Time spent working on tasks formed a key part of team meetings which while primarily discursive in nature also included considerations of visual forms of information and practical tasks.

Some meetings included discussions with or presentations to local, regional and national partners. However, the general structure of meetings was maintained throughout. Team members commented that these processes become increasingly automatic over time.

'It became part of the process and we tended to take it for granted as we went on we arrived at a place where we were clear about processes. The framework was in place, it was accepted and it helped the process'. (SENCo1)

For instance, processes which had provided explicit mediation (Wertsch, 2007) in the early stages of the study became internalised over time and informed team processes as implicit mediation.

'You were there laying all this groundwork and that was just facilitating everything. It just made it all quite an easy process because everything fell into place and we fell into a routine that enabled everything to develop quite nicely.' (SNT1)

The CHAT triangle provided a structure for collective and individual reviews undertaken at different times within and following the study. The use of vocabulary of CHAT including terms such as 'tool', 'subject' and 'object' became to be more readily used in team meetings and team member interviews.

'The tool is the discussion and then the reason we are doing it, the object is (to make) resources for the children.' (SNT2)

'Someone outside, someone new coming in, it made the difference. The tool that we used (was) you. That sounds awful but we did use you a lot to start off with because we were rather dependent in the beginning'. (SENCo1)

Team member reflections highlighted that earlier 'objects' of activity tended to become tools and mediate further development as the tool.

'The object is to create the team. The whole point is to have the support of one another'. (SENCo1)

'The tools are the personalities in the team, the readiness to share, (the) willingness to be open and ask, to question, to listen'. (SENCo4)

Nevertheless team member contributions also highlighted the complexity of issues relating to the Welsh-language which had implications at multiple locations around the CHAT triangle. For instance, it touched deeply personal affective issues of identity in the subject position, and the marginalising pressures experienced by the team. External issues relating to 'rules' and 'community' where those relating to the Welsh-language also framed imperatives to address inequality for practice and for learners as object oriented activity relating to resources.

'The language is important, the Welsh language, but that is why we began because of the difficulties with our mother tongue. That underpins everything we do. It's not the object or the community. Is it part of who we are (the subject), to do with our identity. (But) it is something to do with the object (as well). You could go so far as to say that what we are trying to have is (to have) equal rights for our children. It is political - in our own land we have become marginalised'. (SENCo1)

9.3 DIFFERENT BUT COMPLEMENTARY AIMS

Team perspectives highlighted how research processes were instrumental in effecting change for the team's activity where the objects and outcomes of the team's and team's work were complementary with the objects and outcomes of research process. Team member comments highlighted that the research had been instrumental in effecting change and was highly valued as a positive driver of the team's activity. Comments suggested that the aims of the research and of the team, although different, complemented one another.

'Everyone does know (about your research) but it doesn't bother anyone. You ask if we can record, you say that you are writing something and what does everyone say? 'OK', and then we forget about it'. (SENCo1)

Team members emphasised the view that the researcher and system's minder roles were explicitly experienced in the work as a whole, and specifically during team meetings.

'You know, there always has to be some kind of leader in any group and that doesn't mean that that person is taking over. That is how people are in groups. You are a key person because you are, but we are fully ready to argue and challenge things'. (SENCo1)

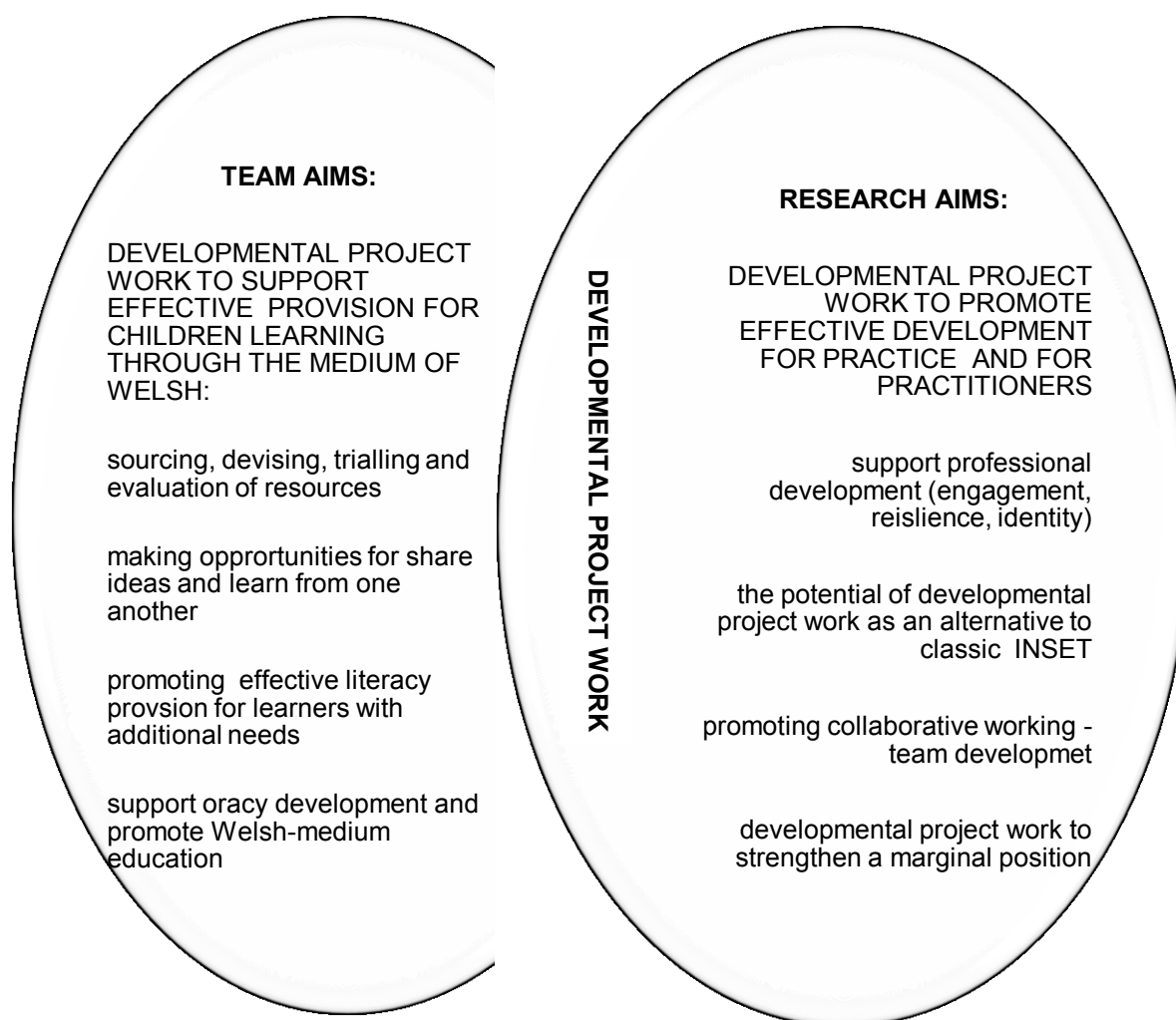
Interviews also highlighted perspectives in which the research itself and research processes were viewed as enhancing the outcomes for the team's work, for instance the increased frequency of meetings:

'So we had you your guidance and the time was created by you by saying that we would have these monthly meetings etc.' (SNT1)

In addition members of the team experienced the systems' minder role as having implications for the team's work overall and in team meetings e.g. in guiding team processes in meetings.

'You have an eye on what needs doing and I think it helps us to see it and we take a part in the management of time but I do think that if we need a push it is you that does it and it is important. It is like a teacher you have to say, 'Right', and although the children have their own ideas sometimes they can get off track, as can we, so (you) keep an eye on the direction (in which) we are travelling'. (SENCo5).

Figure 9.3 Complementary Aims



Team member highlighted that the system's minder role had mediated new ways of working together where the team engaged in work beyond the boundaries which had constrained team activity in the past, and their perceptions that this had contributed to increased levels of efficiency.

I think that now we do things more quickly. I think more efficient is the way to describe it maybe things used to be a bit slow between making decisions about what we are going to do now we know exactly where we are going (and) things get produced much more quickly'. (SENCo3)

Overall transcript data emphasise that the team acted as a forum for distributed working which was experienced as stimulating, fulfilling and developmental by practitioners, and which also contributed outcomes for practice through the development of resources for practice.

CHAPTER 10: THE TEAM IN CONTEXT – NOTIONS OF COMMUNITY

Cole (1996, p.132) argues that context is not only that which surrounds cultural, social and historical objects, events and actions; but that is that is also that which weaves them together (op. cit p.135). This account of the contexts which surround and weave together aspects of the present study includes considerations of the ways in which cultural, historical and social contexts were formative in the emergence of the team, and its ongoing work. Moreover, in the present study the team itself can be considered as a developing context within which team members work and learn with each other and in partnerships with others.

I have described how the team practice as a minority within local and national contexts and how this has significant implications for them as practitioners and for their practice. The present study adopted an interventionist research approach to effect change for this team, recognising that significant material changes to their general circumstances as a minority would be unlikely. Instead the work aimed to empower them to reconstruct constraints which had been experienced as barriers in earlier constructions of professional identity. Undertaking new forms of creative activity in response to problems encountered in practice provided a context in which such reconstructions could come about.

The team's engagement in developmental projects supported reconstructions of perspectives about its potential to take action. This, in turn, supported reconstructions of collective and individual professional identity. The team provided a context in which team members were able to undertake new forms of action. It could also be viewed as a community from which to network with others. In due course would bring about nationwide recognition of the team's strengths.

'The whole point is to have the support of one another, and we are reaching out to other people. A web is developing'. (SENCo1)

'Working as a group, they have provided each other with challenge and support whilst demonstrating persistence, resilience and innovation'. (Chief Learning and Achievement Officer)

While the first steps for these processes of change had been initiated prior to the present study, the evidence gathered highlights that the research and research processes engendered significant change in the way team members perceived their relationships with others.

Emerging contexts for networking resulted from object oriented activity were considered in detail in the analysis and discussion provided in Chapter 8. This discussion highlighted how, in some cases, networking came about as a result of the conditions imposed by a external bodies which were stipulated preconditions for funding requests. I have described how such barriers were initially characterised as 'hoops' through which the team must 'jump' and the unforeseen positive outcomes which might ensue in such work. For instance additional benefits came about as a result of work with regional partners who praised the Oracy resources produced by the team:

'I came away from the meeting completely convinced, having seen it in action, that this resource should be available to schools throughout Wales'.

(Learning Development Advisory Teacher, Regional Partner)

Moreover, this new partner provided a detailed review and valuable feedback about the resource which significantly enhanced the materials. Furthermore, their presence at the national conference in which the team presented the resource provided valuable corroboration. This contributed indirectly, with the consent of officers from our own local authority, to the provision of some additional funding to support the team's work.

'We showed what we are doing and people there were so supportive. They just said, 'great ... what a good idea' and asked how have we got the time to do this, and (when we) tried to explain how we work and how the SENCoS have come together and how we do it they were surprised'. (SENCo5)

This example of regional working provides an illustration of processes which led the team to reconstruct some of the barriers to their practice as challenges. This, in turn, acted as a driver to engage in new ways of working. Experiences of this kind offered opportunities to reframe constraints as potential opportunities, where 'barriers' or 'hoops' could be reconstructed as 'bridges' to new learning.

Responses made by the team's partners within the local authority highlighted how the team's standing was considered to have been enhanced by the work.

'While I was out of school on secondment I got the impression that the group were considered to be a model of good practice by schools and other clusters in the authority.' (Local Authority Link Officer)

'People are aware of (the team) locally. The resources are being used by schools outside the local authority. We are proud of the recognition the team has received'. (Headteacher3)

Local partners also commented on how the team's work had contributed to the standing of the local authority in regional and national contexts.

Such positive regard for the work expressed by others offered important feedback to the team. Validation such as this had implications for the team's perceptions of itself and its work.

And then we have made inroads into Wales nationally. Basically it is down to the work that we have been able to do as a group isn't it?'. (SNT1)

Yes – we feel as if we are someone. We aren't just individuals SENCos, we are a group and when I talk to friends about the things we have done they are very impressed, they say, 'well done, carry on'. (SENCo2)

It also provided encouragement and motivation to continue to develop and to widen their field of ambit.

The confidence will help us to move on to do things that we haven't been doing before ... sharing ideas with people further afield so people can try to use the things that we are making and experience the things that we would like to pass on to them, and try things with their children that we are using with ours.' (SENCo1)

Over the course of the study the team have strengthened their original marginal position and has readily engaged in networking activity with local, regional, national and commercial partners. Such developments have contributed to a wide range of outcomes which will be described in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 11: OUTCOMES OF TEAM WORKING

In Chapter 8 I provided an account of the objects of team activity and how they had expanded over the course of the study as the team developed and expanded their work together and with others. Activity oriented towards these objects engendered outcomes which in turn offered new opportunities for further object oriented activity.

The expanding nature of the team's work was such that further outcomes emerged and developed over time. Three structured reviews were undertaken at intervals throughout the study. In order to encapsulate trajectories of development this account of the study's outcomes will centre on the perspectives of the team which were shared in these review meetings in October 2007 at the outset of the study, in October 2008, immediately following the study, and at the end of my involvement with the team in September 2010.

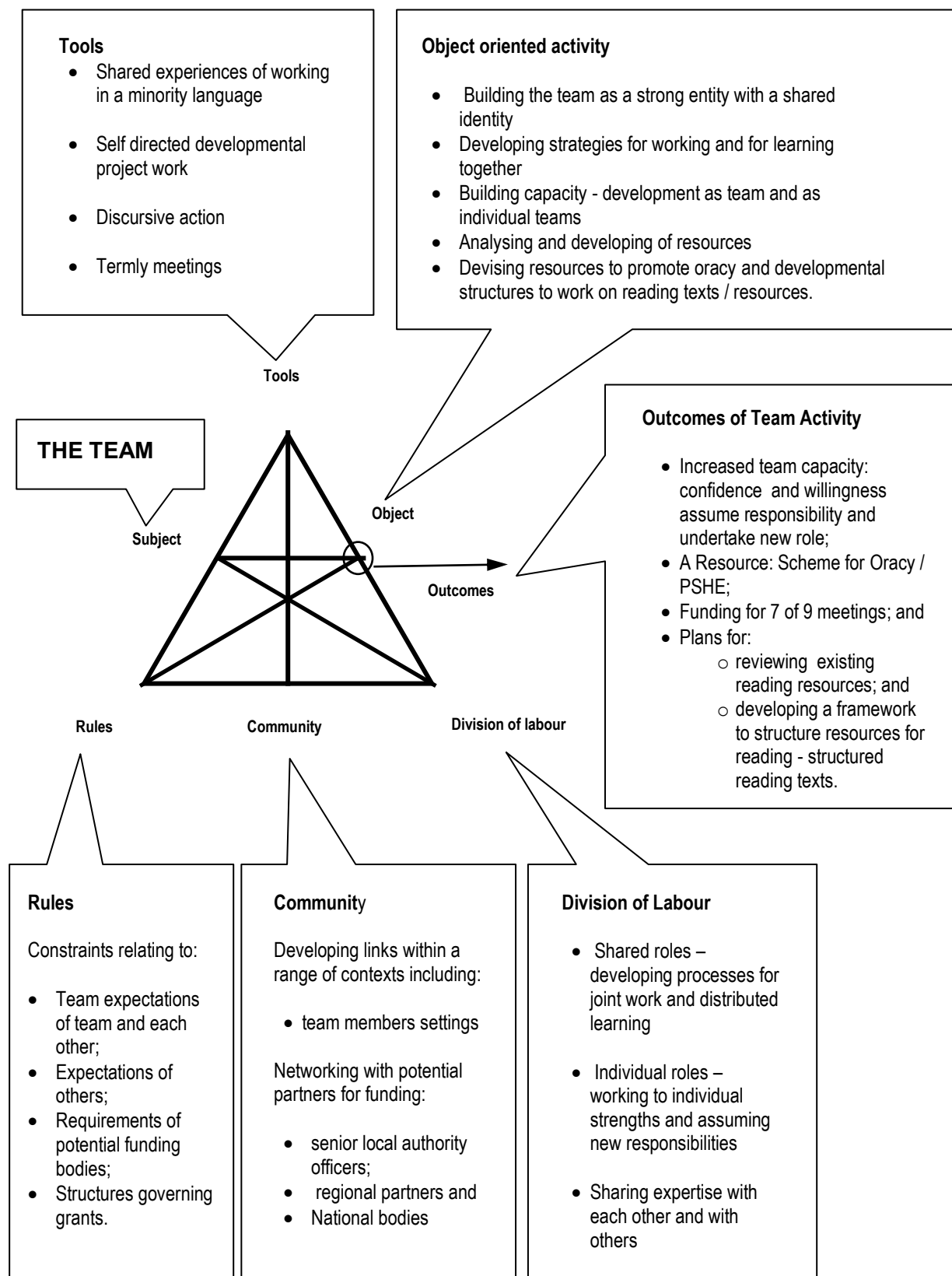
11.1 OUTCOMES OF THE TEAM'S WORK AT THE OUTSET OF THE PRESENT STUDY - OCTOBER 2007

I have described how the present study centres on the team's work in a new phase of working which had built on earlier work in termly meetings which were funded directly by the local authority. The infrequency of these meeting was considered to have resulted in rather slow progress towards the objects of team activity. Even so, this review illustrated the changing perspectives of members about the team, its role, and what it might achieve. The discussion is summarised below in Figure 11.1.

By this stage the team had succeeded in achieving self determination over their work and established development project work as a medium for its activity. In addition, the team had identified their first project, the development of a Welsh-medium resource to promote oracy development using Circle Time (Mosley, 2005) approaches. Moreover, the team had agreed a plan for future work to review and develop resources to support readers at the earliest levels because insufficient resources of this nature were available in Welsh.

In order to achieve their objects and outcomes the team had reconstructed their collective professional identity to enable reconsiderations of possibilities for action as individual practitioners and as a practitioner team. At this time work had enabled the team to acknowledge their collective expertise and capacity to undertake work of this nature. The confidence to make such a radical shift in perspective came about as a response to high levels of dissatisfaction about their minority status and its implications for learners, and in the context of shared team work.

Figure 11.1 – Review of the team’s work October 2007



During this review meeting the team's discourse highlighted the importance of what had gone before for facilitating further work. This included recognition that coming together as a team afforded tools for future work together on projects to solve shared problems experienced in their practice.

'We have created this forum – we have had time to develop this group. In a way it doesn't matter what the (other) outcomes are, the forum is more important, the forum underpins everything'. (SENCo1)

Moreover, the discussion highlighted perspectives that the outcomes of the earlier phase of working had included concrete outcomes such as the draft Oracy Resource, and a plan to take action in relation to shortages of Welsh-medium resources for reading. Other key outcomes were less tangible but would facilitate the team's future work, such as the increased capacity of the team to engage in new forms of working.

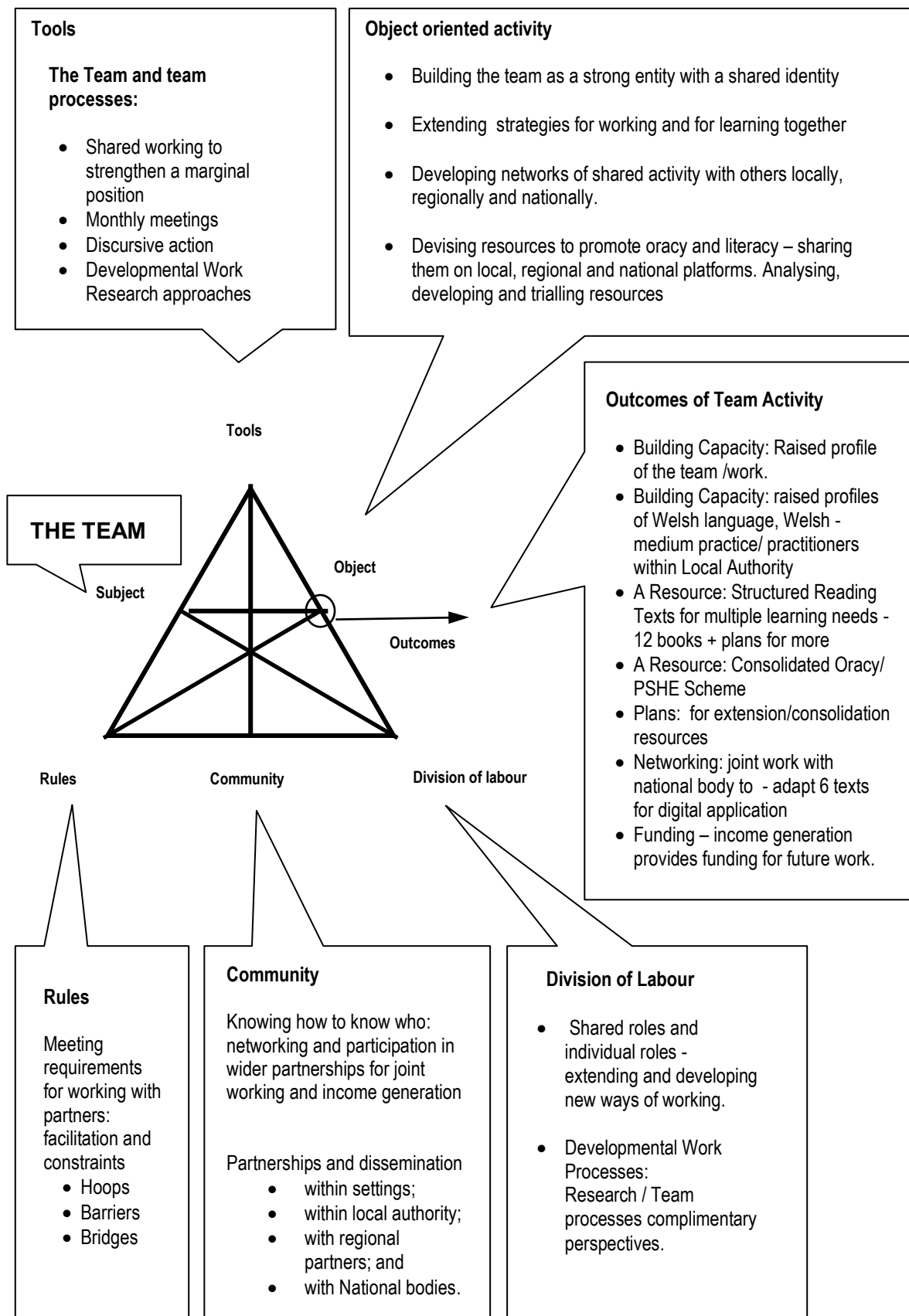
'We all feel a bit marginalised because of the specialist nature of the work that we do out there in our schools, so that when we come together it is just great'. (SNT1).

11.2 OUTCOMES OF THE TEAM'S WORK AT THE END OF THE STUDY PERIOD - OCTOBER 2008

This review took place in the meeting at the beginning of the academic year following the period of the case study. As such it reflects the outcomes that had come about during the period of the study. Most striking is that the team did not consider that the end of the research would mark the end of the new ways of working which had emerged over the course of the study. Accordingly, the review which is illustrated in Figure 11.2 marks a point within a continuum rather than an end point.

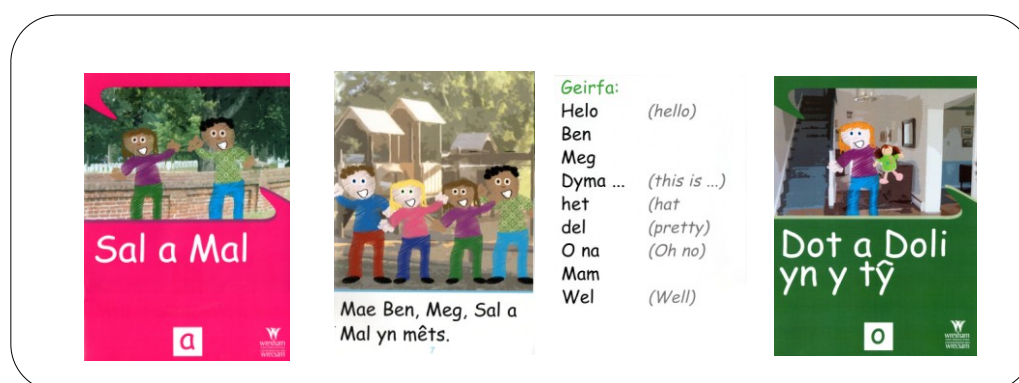
Concrete outcomes emerging during this phase of the work had included 12 reading texts for early readers and plans for 8 more which together would form the first level in a structured series. Joint work with the local authority's reprographics team and the local authority's inclusion support team facilitated the printing of a number of sets for use in schools as part of the ongoing trialling and team review, and also for circulation to partners throughout Wales for peer review of the materials. In particular the team took copies of the 12 books and the draft oracy scheme to show to delegates at a national special educational needs conference

Figure 11.2 – Review of the team’s work October 2008



A positive reaction to the resources was received. These included many expressions of interest about the Oracy Scheme and about the Structured reading Texts from delegates. One delegate's interest in the books led to an approach from the National Grid for Learning (Wales) about a project to work together to animate digital versions of the books on the internet.

Figure 11.3: Sample pages from first 12 Structured Reading Texts

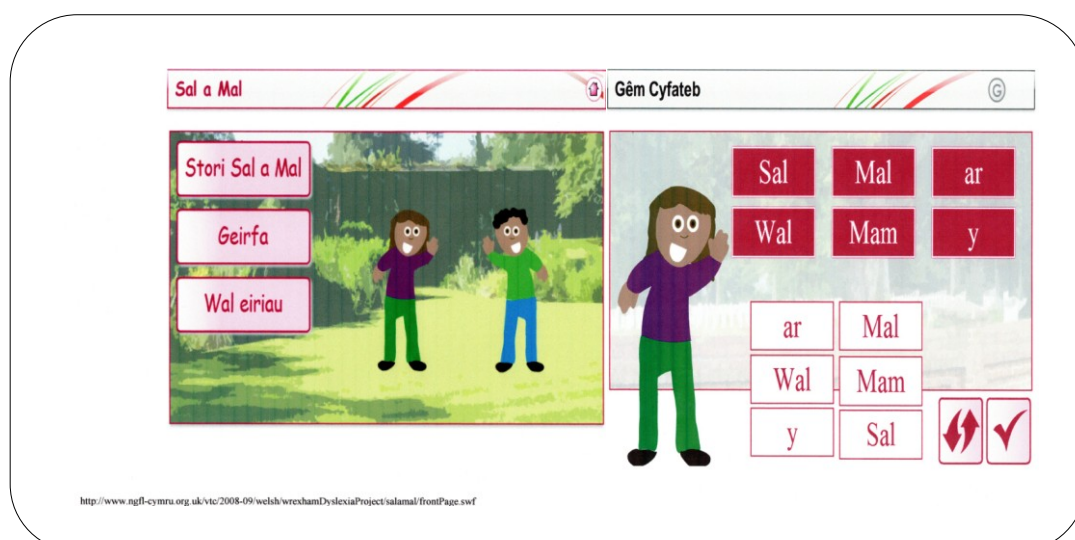


As a result of this the team entered a partnership with the National Grid for Learning (Wales) in a project to animate 6 of the 12 book for inclusion on its website, and to devise interactive digital games to complement the material. This offered opportunities, not only to further the team's work for learners, but also for income generation which would be used to support future work.

These positive outcomes were a source of pride and representative of the success of the team's work including the recognition of their skills in forums across Wales.

'But everyone who was there that saw the books thought that they were great. It was lovely to have that reaction. We were feeling quite like stars really'. (SENCo2)

Figure 11.4: Sample pages from website – animated version of structured texts and associated games



11.2.1 Team perspectives on the relationship between the team's work and the research

Team members recognised the connections between the research which provided the foundations on which this work had been built and from which further work could be undertaken.

'For instance the success when (team members) went to (national conference) last year, and the books being animated online. So that has been motivating for us all and made us even more committed to you and your research ... to the whole project'. (SNT1)

At that stage individual reflections highlighted the transformations for team constructions of professional identity for individuals and for the team, about team roles which have been undertaken within the team, in partnership with others, and as practitioners' within their settings, and of the possibilities available to them. These transformations of perspectives were illustrated in a series of statements to be found in transcripts from different points in the team's work. Initially team members articulated perspectives of what could not be done.

'I couldn't think outside the box because I just felt I was a full time teacher'. (SNT1)

Later in the study team members would tend to comment on what had been achieved:

'Well things have certainly developed ... you can see the outcomes now. It is nice to see that something has come out of all the work, something is there now, something positive, and something that we hope will be useful to lots of people'. (SENCo3)

Further team member comments also focused on what might be achieved in the future.

'And other agencies have shown an interest in wanting to work with us so that is the point. We're not just (teachers), although there is nothing wrong with being a teacher, but we can offer more'. (SENCo1)

11.2.2 Partner perspectives of the team and its work

In Chapter 3 I described the process in which the views of local authority officers and other partners were elicited. These comments highlighted how these partners took a keen interest in the team and its work, and had generally high levels of awareness about the outcomes of the work. Their views included expressions that the team's work had been beneficial not only for the team but also for the authority as a whole.

'On local, regional and national levels it's had provided really good feedback for (Local Authority) and shown that (Local Authority) can be innovative and develop good practice and resources that have got national standing.' (Local Authority Inclusion Officer)

'People are aware of (the team) locally. The resources are being used by schools outside the local authority. We are proud of the recognition the group has received.' (Headteacher3)

Comments also reflected views that the team have become influential for practice in their settings, within the Welsh Sector and across the wider authority.

'The group and its work have had an influence on the way the individuals practice in their schools. The team work has encouraged them to develop their own practice, as well contributing to consistency of practice across the schools. While I was out of school on secondment I got the impression that the group were considered to be a model of good practice by schools and other clusters in the authority.' (Local Authority Link Officer)

Comments also suggested that the team was viewed as having been a forum in which members offered mutual support to each other and to other practitioners, and that this had been instrumental in the development of raised levels of resilience and the ability to overcome difficulties.

'Working as a group they have provided each other with challenge and support whilst demonstrating persistence, resilience and innovation.' (Chief Learning and Achievement Officer)

'I think the outcomes are credit to everyone who has been involved, you have seen it through and come up with ideas and outcomes and overcome some difficulties e.g. around publication. You have got there in the end and that it has been well worth doing.' (Local Authority Inclusion Officer)

Local authority officers who had been involved in the earlier work of the team commented on changes for team members, and head teacher partners commented on outcomes relating to the way the team and team members were perceived by others outside the team.

'For the team as a whole, there has been a greater motivation, energy, drive and a 'can do' approach rather than a 'poor us' approach. For individual team members levels of confidence and risk-taking are judged to have increased.' (Local Authority Principal Educational Psychologist)

'The increased professional standing and the confidence gained from the joint working can only lead to extra confidence when working with learners with additional learning needs. They have had opportunities to lead other professionals, and have offered support to others e.g. in staff meetings, conferences.' (Headteacher2)

Perspectives articulated by national partners offered an outsider view of the strengths of the team and team members.

'I have met several members of the team and have been impressed by their dedication and commitment to improving practice/resources for learners with additional learning needs – they are clearly passionate about their work.' (National Commissioning Officer)

11.3 OUTCOMES OF THE TEAM'S WORK FOLLOWING THE STUDY PERIOD – SEPTEMBER 2010: REVIEWING THE WORK AT A TIME OF TRANSITION

The third review was undertaken two years after the 9 meetings which formed the basis for the present case study. The time that had elapsed offered new perspectives on the work which had been undertaken during the study. It also provided an opportunity to review the ongoing work of the team and the outcomes which had continue to emerge. This meeting, my last, provided a further opportunity to use the CHAT model to review the work and its outcomes.

Many team processes established during the period of the study had been continued although the audio recording and full transcription of the discourse occurring in meetings no longer occurred as a matter of course. Data pertaining to planned and executed activity and correspondence continued to be gathered and to be held digitally for display on the screen as necessary. In addition, contemporaneous minutes continued to be gathered in the flip chart format to be used as the basis for minutes circulated for the purposes of record keeping and accountability.

This final review would mark a transition following the completion of a major book writing project commissioned by the Welsh Assembly Government in partnership with Publisher1. In addition, at the time this meeting took place, the interactive texts were completed and available on the internet. Both projects had provided opportunities for income generation and these funds would allow the team to continue to meet for the foreseeable future. In addition, the National Exam Committee, who had taken over the role of commissioning resources, had expressed interest in the Oracy Scheme.

During this review one member of the team expressed resistance to revisiting the CHAT model. Instead she offered an alternative metaphor of a germinating seed to express the outcomes and changes that had come about. The potential of this metaphor as it stood were considered and agreed by all to have significant limitations. However the team's exploration and development of the proposition demonstrated that such an organic metaphor of growth had struck a chord and offered scope for the team's active engagement with the CHAT model.

The discussion, which is reported in full below highlighted that the outcomes described would not have occurred without the creative object oriented activity which brought into being transformations for the team, and had included the concrete outcomes of the work achieved in joint work with partners throughout Wales.

Meeting 10 – Transitional Review: excerpt (part 1)

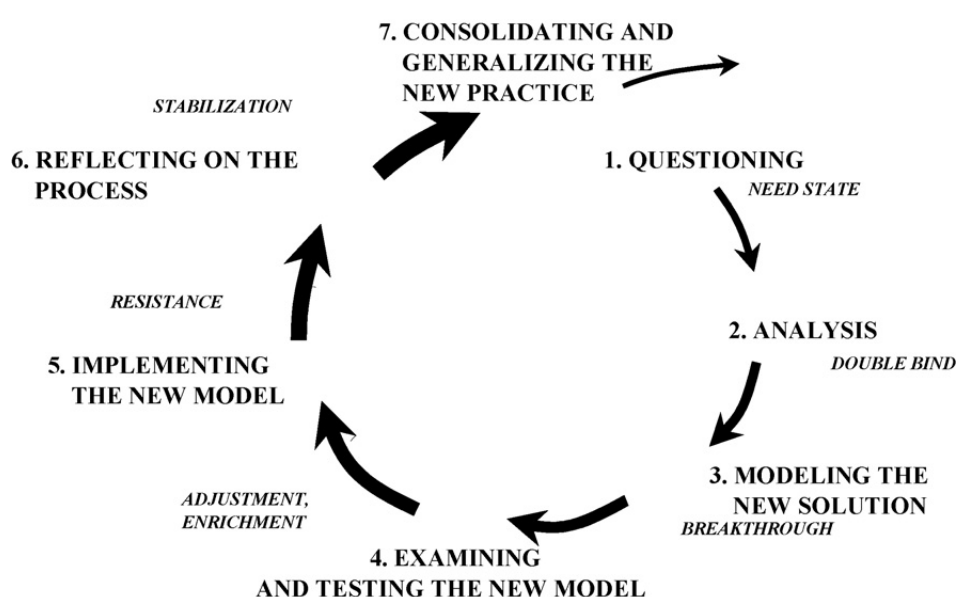
- EP I couldn't have done my research if it had not been for all your ideas ... could you ... help me to understand how you see the work around the triangle?
- SENCo5 I don't like the triangle... I think of us as ... a seed ... which has been planted and has grown and there are flowers and there are leaves ... and I think that that is what has happened ... and now we have the finished flowers in the garden ... and that's that...
- EP ...well that is fine ... but we haven't just been like a seed in the soil that has grown in the sun ... we have been active in bringing it about...
- SENCo4 ...that is why I always use it as an example... I say that in the group that I work with we always used to sit around and grumble ... but now we go out and get things done. When people are complaining ... I say, 'stop your whinging ... we went out and did something' ... well the team did it ... that is what I feel that we have done...
- SNT1: ... to get back to your idea ... we, the team... were the sun and the rain ...
- SENCo2 ... the storm sometimes...
- SNT1 ... we were the elements...
- SENCo5 ... that caused this plant to grow...
- EP ... OK so in fact we are not the seed ...we are the environment ...
- SENCo5 ...but the seed was the ideas...
- SENCo4: ... but ideas on their own are no good for anything...
- SENCo1 ... it was more than just the ideas ... it was the situation ... that there were no suitable books in Welsh ... there was no-one supporting us...
- SENCo5the soil was barren ... it needed compost....
- SENCo4 ...and SENCo1 she just stood up and said her piece ... to an audience from all over Wales ... that this is what we were doing ...
- SENCo2 ...and we have put some kind of fertiliser.
- EP OK ... a metaphor ... so what is the metaphor... thinking of examples of what we have done...
- SENCo5 ...the ideas that have gone into this...
- SNT1 ...the work....well a community has grown up around the whole team...
- EP ... has the community grown up around the team? Or have we created the conditions in which (it grew)?
- SENCo1 ...I think that along with the community we ... it is the relationships ... more than the community that has been the fertiliser ... our relationships (with each other) ... it is the relationships that have acted as a fertiliser because we have fed off each other and ...

Meeting 10 – Transitional Review: excerpt (part 2)

- EP ... in an active process ... what about the 'rules', the things that are beyond our control ... have the rules changed ... have we had an effect on what is going on ... are those things outside of us different now from how they were before
- SENCo1 ...no it is us who have changed now ...
- SNT1 .. yes ... (we have) more confidence ...
- SENCo1 ...we have changed the rules ... although they are outside of the team ... we used to be constrained by the rules and now we are not...
- EP ...are the rules different now ... because of what we have done?
- SENCo1yes because we have made things different ... before it was no money, no hope, no support ... those were the rules that were constraining us ... but now we don't worry about them ...
- SNT1 ...now we just have enough confidence to tackle whatever comes our way...
- EP With 'division of labour,' is it that team members have done the things that they can to do best for the team?
- SENCo1 I think that it is more than that ...I think that people have taken responsibility for things that maybe they wouldn't have been happy to do before ...
- EP ...that people have extended themselves out of their comfort zone...
- SNT2 ... although we have had periods when we have left the meeting feeling quite negative what with all the hurdles we have had to get over ... we have had to work at it ...
- SENCo1 ... and that is why I think that we have to hang on to this ... but we have got to the end of one journey. I think that the most important thing to come out of this meeting is that we carry on. I think that we do need a project ... maybe not big ... and not today ...I don't feel that we are ready ... and the idea of doing something just for the sake of it ... well it wouldn't be our ideas would it?
- EP ...because all the projects we have worked on have emerged naturally from some aspect of practice. Perhaps there will be an opportunity ... like SNT1 has been saying – this 50 books won't be enough
- SNT2 ...that it isn't going to stop ... do you mean?
- SENCo1 ...well it isn't enough....
- SNT1 : ... it is just a drop in the ocean...
- SENCo1 : ...when the children reach the last book in our pack...
- SNT2 : ... they need something else before...
- SENCo1 : ... so ...what shall we do next?

This discourse highlighted how the application and development of the metaphor of growth could be considered as an example of the sequence of activity described by Engeström and Sannino's (2010) Expansive Learning Cycle. It also highlighted the team's ability to use distributed discourse which included contradictions and disagreements, as tools for creative thinking and learning. This encouraged reflection, analysis and problem solving discursive action to achieve changes for shared thinking which could be subsequently considered, examined, tested and applied to future work

Figure 11.5: Sequence of learning actions in an expansive learning cycle
(Engeström and Sannino, 2010, p.8)



The discourse also highlighted the diversity of individual team perspectives and illustrated processes of distributed thinking in which individual perspectives are aired, externalised and considered. Applications of the strands of 'D' Analysis (Middleton, 2010) to this excerpt, illustrate that the initial 'Diexis' - pointing out, of a metaphor with which to review the team's overall work, was followed by stages of 'Deliberation' in which the idea was explored, and 'Delineation' in which the first shared conclusions were drawn. 'Departure' comments included the application of the refined metaphor to the dimensions of the CHAT model which facilitated decision making about next steps, 'Development'. This also included a reiteration of the team's commitment to developmental project working as an approach for meeting

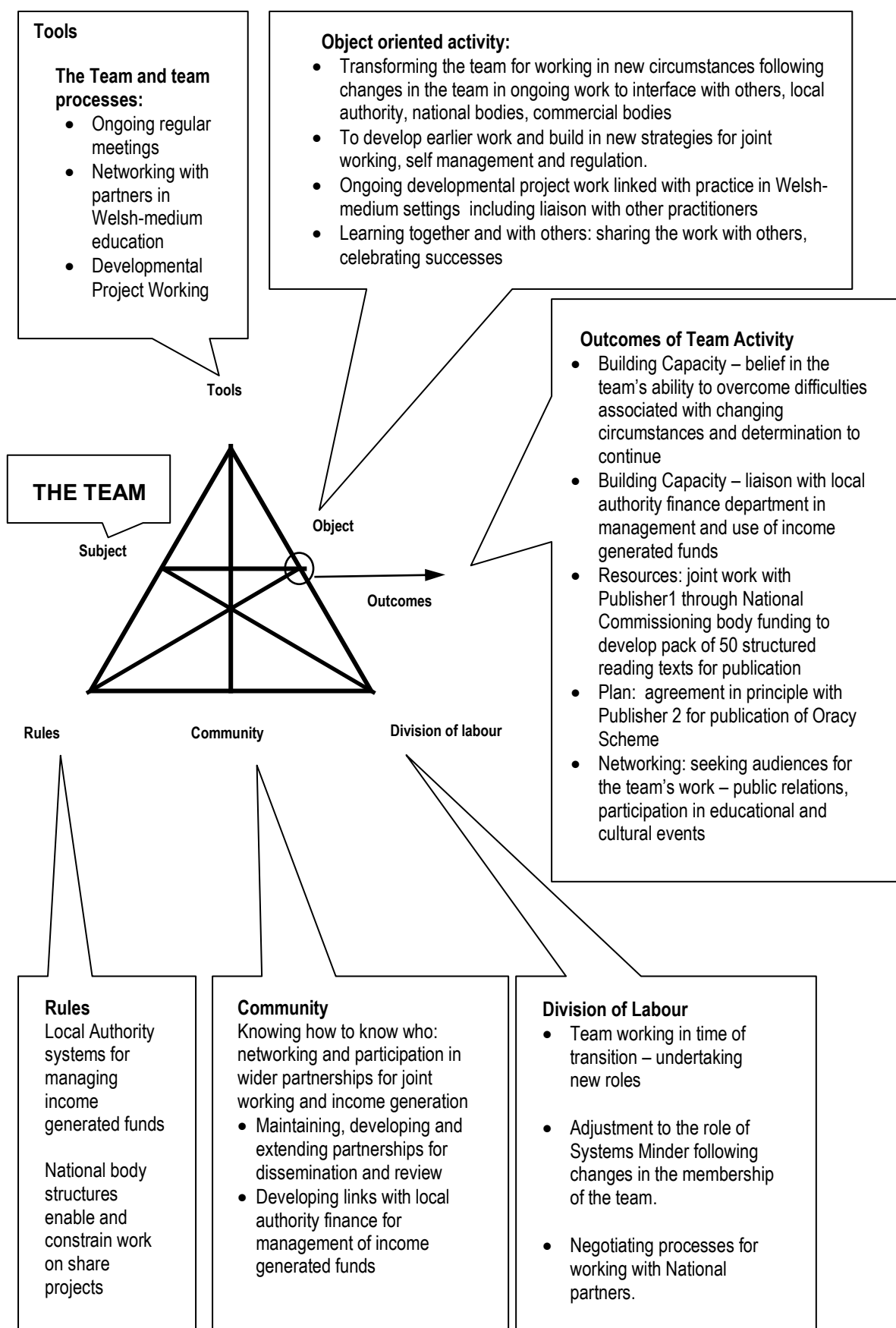
their obligations as practitioners through the development of resources to support the learners they teach.

In this sense, the team's development continued to be both the object and outcome of ongoing activity. The team and its processes had continued to change and develop in response to emerging challenges, external constraints, and the success of earlier outcomes. It continued to be sustained by the enthusiasm and motivation of members keen to address challenges encountered in practice, to meet the needs of learners and to address the issues of equality for learners, for practice, and for practitioners.

Positive outcomes such as the funds which had been generated through work with national partners brought new challenges as the team began to develop understandings of corporate funding relating to their own budget and to manage their expenditure. Developing understandings of how to maximise the opportunities provided by this source of funds also included the development of new relationships, 'knowing how to know who' (Edwards, 2005).

At the time of this meeting further concrete outcomes included the completion of joint work with Publisher1 in a project funded by National Commissioning Body. The team had completed the development of the 50 texts and were awaiting the final publication of the series. They were hopeful that the materials would be ready to be launched at a national cultural event, The National Eisteddfod, which was to be held within the Local Authority the following summer of 2011. Additional concrete outcomes at that time included agreement in principle with Publisher2 to work towards the publication of Oracy Scheme. The information shared in this review is illustrated in Figure 11.6 below

Figure 11.6 – Review of the team’s work September 2010



11.4 EMERGING OUTCOMES OF THE TEAM'S WORK

The team continues to meet and continues to work collaboratively with each other and with others on self directed developmental project work to bring about change for practice and learners and also for practitioners.

Figure 11.7 Published Series of Structured Reading Texts



Figure 11.7 includes some sample pages from the pack of 50 books written by the team.

Delays in the publication processes meant that the series was not published in time for a formal launch at National Eisteddfod in August 2011, but one set of the books was made available to the team who took the opportunity provided by this cultural event to bring the books to the attention of the public. This included seeking opportunities to talk to the media including the opportunity to participate in an interview broadcast in a radio news programme.

Informal feedback from teachers working with the series strongly suggests that children are delighted to engage with the stories and that the series offers opportunities for learners to make progress in small steps and in ways which support the building of confidence. Communication exchanged with members of the marketing department of Publisher1 clarified that most of the original print run of 200 sets had been sold. Nevertheless team members report that as it stands, the pack provides insufficient opportunities to reinforce the development of phonological understandings and skills and that an extension to the series would be desirable. In addition the team recognise the ongoing need for resources to support development

at higher levels. They remain highly motivated and extremely keen to work together to develop further texts to meet these needs.

The Local Authority continues to take an interest and to value the team's skills and expertise and to contribute support to facilitate its work. In addition, I understand from the current members of the team that the discussions with National Education Committee officers relating to the publication of the Oracy Scheme have concluded, and that it is to be published and distributed to all schools throughout Wales in 2013.

CHAPTER 12: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS: STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY, FUTURE ACTIONS AND PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

12.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I will review the thesis and consider the strengths and limitations of the research. I will discuss its contribution and applicability to the field of educational research and practice. In addition I will consider the transformations of theory and theorising which emerged during and as a result of the work, and the implications of this for the study and for its outcomes. Methodological and analytical choices will also be critically considered and evaluated. The study sought to balance multiple perspectives and goals including my own multiple roles as team member, researcher and 'system's minder' (Glenny, 2005) and I will review the ways in which this constrained and enriched the study. The dynamic interrelationships between the aims and purposes of the team's work, and of the need to maintain a coherent approach to the research and its integrity will also be considered and evaluated.

A reflective approach was adopted throughout the thesis and some ideas considered in this overview have been considered earlier in the text. In formulating a linear account of the case study, its origins, processes, and outcomes which includes considerations of the cultural and temporal contexts of the study from multiple perspectives some key concepts and ideas are visited and revisited at different points in the thesis for instance 'The Expansive Learning Cycle' (Engeström and Sannino, 2010). For ease of reference, certain key figures included to illustrate elements in the text may also appear more than once in the thesis.

12.2 DEVELOPMENTS AND TRANSFORMATIONS OF THEORY AND THEORISING AND THE STUDY

The thesis describes the ways in which the present study builds on elements of professional development undertaken over a long career centred on supporting learning and in which the application of theory in practice was firmly established. I have explained how I began this work assuming that the present study could be considered as one more step in a continuous journey of professional development over time. As it became clear that in making this assumption I had underestimated the scope of work required at this level of study I acknowledged that time had been lost in attempts to fit existing frameworks of understanding to the present study. Nevertheless, hindsight has shown that the effort expended had contributed rich new understandings of theory from the cultural paradigm. These understandings have

been consolidated and deepened by work published throughout the research period, for instance the overview of the Theory of Expansive Learning published by Engeström and Sannino (2010). This article provided a foundation on which to build the analysis of the data gathered.

The work of the 'Learning in and for Interagency Working' project (Daniels et al, 2010) applied Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT) to multi-agency working. Publications emerging from that project highlighted ways in which discourse could be considered as a tool for activity and work. For example, the 'D' Analysis approach (Daniel 2010a; Middleton, 2010) became an essential tool in the analysis object oriented activity. This approach allowed trajectories of change to be revealed and assisted in the identification of conversations which became pivotal moments for change in the present study.

12.3 STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

12.3.1 The study in context -

advantages and disadvantages of taking a situated approach

The study examined the work of a team of Welsh-medium practitioner working and learning together to effect change for their practice. It considered how as users of a minority language team members experience challenges in their practice. Statistical information used in this thesis is drawn from data gathered in the 2001 Census. Although more recent census information was gathered in 2011, information relating the use of Welsh was yet to be released at the time of writing. In recent years the percentage of those who use the Welsh language in Wales has generally been viewed as stable and the thesis assumes that trends observed in earlier decades have been maintained in the decade to 2011.

The thesis highlights the ways in which the present study was situated within a highly specific context, that of Welsh-medium education, and was built on the work of an earlier project. In the sections that follow I review the advantages of founding the study on the earlier work of others and how it was possible to tailor the work to minimise the potential disadvantages. One advantage was that a team of practitioners had already been identified and established. At the outset of the work this team was both sufficiently committed to continuing to work together and sufficiently challenged in their practice to be willing to adopt new ways of working to effect change for practice. The team's consent for this shift was an essential precondition of the work. In addition, local authority officer support which had included some funding was maintained for the present study. Although insufficient to

meet the full needs of the study, this provided valuable support and a platform from which to seek additional funding.

New ways of working together required the frequency of team meetings to be increased which required the sourcing of additional funds. In the first instance these were obtained from a national teaching body. This had depended on the team's assumption of responsibility and accountability to that body. These adjustments were necessary and significant and depended on the team's ability and willingness to embrace change. The thesis documents the team's experience of these adjustments which included undertaking new and extended roles and in overcoming obstacles. This willingness was a reflection of the high levels of commitment of the team to the team and its work, to the research process, and also to my research.

A potential disadvantage of situating the work in the context of Welsh-medium education was that the research addressed a highly specific minority area of practice within education in Wales, which is itself a very small country within the wider United Kingdom. Care was necessary to ensure that such a tightly focused area of study did not limit the applicability of the study to alternative contexts. In fact the study was structured so that Welsh-medium education provided the context for the work but its focus was to consider the implications of working as a minority with limited access to teaching and assessment resources. The thesis has illustrated how the study's aims and objectives dovetailed with the aims and objectives of the team's work, which were complementary and mutually beneficial to one another.

The study considered the implications of the work for this team of practitioners who occupy a marginal position. It took an interventionist approach to support practitioner activity to address the challenges they face. Because of this the study's research processes may be applied in work to effect positive change for comparable teams of practitioners working as, or for minority populations. For instance the approach could be adopted in work to engender change for practice to support practitioners who use other minority languages. In addition, they are likely to be applicable in work to strengthen a marginal position for groups of practitioners for whom practice is significantly different to that of the majority, e.g. those who work to support the specific needs of children in care, children from traveller families, or children of families who have migrated for the purposes of work.

In each of these examples issues relating to the power of the 'authoritative discourse' (Bakhtin, 1981) may contribute specific challenges for practice which could lead to

feelings of isolation and disempowerment for the practitioners working to meet their needs. Adopting an interventionist approach to support and promote developmental project work in such contexts may usefully strengthen such marginal positions. Further research would be necessary to test whether the study's methods if replicated within educational contexts such as these would engender similar outcomes for practitioners and for practice.

It is arguable too that such an interventionist approach could be used to support any team of practitioners working together to enhance their practice as was recognised by a local authority partner who commented:

'(t)his type of work would benefit English medium cluster SENCos to facilitate better working together, sharing good practice, self support groups, and working together to support local issues'. (Local Authority Primary Inclusion Manager)

This attempt to develop strategies for work to strengthen a marginal position may be applied when groups of practitioners work together at a local level to develop mutually supportive ways of working with one another. Further research would be necessary to test this hypothesis.

12.4 STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF STUDY'S METHODOLOGY

12.4.1 Applications of Developmental Work Research and Change Laboratory

Developmental Work Research (DWR), (Engeström, 2007; Daniels and Edwards, 2010) approaches were applicable because facilitating the team's work was identified as part of my responsibilities by local authority officers and the Educational Psychology Service. Particular advantages ensued given the small scale of the research study. For instance the work served a dual purpose where time spent on research activities simultaneously provided an educational psychology service to team member practitioners and their settings. Moreover, the demands of the research processes meant that the increased frequency of meetings provided additional opportunities for the team to work together on self identified developmental projects. In due course the team's activity would generate sufficient income to become largely self funding.

The study was supported by and, in turn supported developments for the team. My own development within multiple roles as practitioner and team member was included in these overall developmental outcomes. Research processes included the processing of evidence gathered, reviewed and analysed as researcher and system's minder contributed to my own understandings of the potential of my professional roles. The interdependence of team processes, research processes, and my practice

is highlighted through researcher reflections and team member comments. Such secure footings located within my own practice and that of other team members offered firm foundations for the application of DWR methods.

I have discussed how the study's methodology applied an adapted version of Engeström's Change Laboratory (2007). Making these adaptations risked compromising the coherence of the approach and it was necessary to ensure that the changes did not compromise the work. I have described how the decision to apply the adaptations reflected resourcing limitations. However, my account also flags up significant benefits for inclusivity and participation. In addition the adaptations made to Change Laboratory approach supported team processes as meetings also provided shared time for undertaking joint work on developmental projects. Flexible application of these joint processes supported subtle adjustments to balance implicit and explicit mediation, for instance where existing processes become familiar and internalised, or when new processes were introduced which required more explicit mediation.

Adaptations to the Change Laboratory were also made in response to the needs of the team. One of the challenges to the use of the Change Laboratory identified by Engeström (2007, p.382) relates this to its use with participants who may be more vulnerable. He asks:

'can Change Laboratories be useful with children, or with underprivileged, marginalized and silenced groups of people? Or will the method turn into a form of paternalistic manipulation if used with such subjects?'

In his response he suggests:

'(i)t seems clear that to take such subjects as equal interlocutors in interventions, the researchers need to learn new ways to listen to and amplify the voices of the subjects.' (op. cit.)

The present team is comprised of members who are very experienced practitioners and who, in their work as SENCo or Special Needs Teacher for their settings, undertake work of significant responsibility. Nevertheless the thesis highlights how fears of being misunderstood and underestimated by those who practice outside Welsh-medium provision had caused them to take up defended positions in the past.

Teräs (2007, p.108) describes the use Change Laboratory approaches in work with learners working in an additional language within intercultural groups as a context in which multiple scripts may operate simultaneously and may clash with one another. In the context of the present study such scripts might include researcher scripts, developmental project work scripts, scripts from past experience, scripts of the way

things should be and scripts about what can be done. Teräs perceives intercultural learning, *'as a process of reciprocal change, transformation, and development between cultures and people'* (2007, p.110). Team member contributions highlighted how being in a group with others who work in Welsh and being able to work together in Welsh raised their confidence. It also provided contexts in which risks could be taken. Arranging team meetings to combine Change Laboratory working with developmental project working supported reciprocal learning between team members and others.

The research evidence revealed that more radical ideas tended to be articulated tentatively. Adaptations to the Change Laboratory processes allowed the facilitation to take account of the need to nurture and support *'expressions of interests which might be expressed in fragmentary and weakly articulated suggestions which (could be) easily overlooked'* (Engeström, 2007) and emphasised the need for active listening, encouragement and participation from all members of the team.

12.4.2 Outcomes of the team's work:

validating past work and motivating future plans

The thesis outlines the outcomes emerging from the study in Chapter 11. This account highlights that these are far reaching and wide ranging. These outcomes have included implications for the professional development of the team and individual team members, and also for the team's standing within local, regional and national networks. Concrete outcomes include published materials which have effected change not just for the team's practice but for others working in Welsh-medium education. Moreover, these changes have been sustained beyond the time frame of the study and after my direct involvement had ceased. At the time of writing team members continue to work collaboratively with national and commercial partners on developmental projects which have been identified and initiated by the team.

12.4.3 Multiple researcher roles – balancing advantages and disadvantages

The thesis has considered the implications of the multiple researcher roles. My own roles included work as Educational Psychologist, researcher and 'system's minder' (Glenny, 2005). The study offers an example of educational psychological provision in which the psychologist works in partnership with school practitioners to engender systemic change for practice and practitioners. As a participant researcher I shared some understanding of the challenges which Welsh-medium practitioners face. My bilingualism allowed the research to be conducted in the preferred language of team members. One potential disadvantage of being a participant researcher included the

risk of over-identification with team member problems in ways which might interfere with the facilitation of processes to engender change for these practitioners and for their practice. Team member comments have shown that the three dimensions of my roles within the team were viewed as being complimentary, with each aspect making a significant contribution to effective team work.

At the time the study was planned and undertaken it had been my intention to minimise the impact of the research element of the multiple roles I would undertake in the study. I was particularly concerned that the research interests should not be prioritised over the team's collectively identified developmental project work and was concerned that research processes should not compromise this. During the study I had been impressed by the creativity, resilience and resourcefulness of the team, their commitment to its work, and their willingness to undertake extended, enhanced and challenging roles in the developmental projects and in networking. Changes in perspectives within the team and about the team at local, regional and national levels were transformed over the time frame of the research.

Team member views expressed during meetings to gather their views about the team and its work reported in Chapter 9 highlighted perspectives which stressed the importance of the research process and of the roles I had undertaken as facilitator and system's minder. Such perspectives were somewhat perturbing at that stage and caused me question my own interpretations of the dynamics within the team.

However, the task of transcribing and translating audio data from team meetings offered opportunities to closely examine of the dynamics of the talk recorded, including my own. The work allowed observations of the nuances of talk in the meetings and how they developed from one to another. This observation highlighted shifts in my role as a facilitator of change. For instance, trends emerged which highlighted qualitative shifts in the nature of my contributions over time. During our earlier work this included the affirmation and encouragement of tentative suggestions. Later meetings included contributions which modelled directions of thinking occurring in the talk and sought to clarify details of decision making and planning. The transcripts revealed that as the team became more confident and better able to assert and justify their positions and ideas my contributions were more likely to challenge and to question the ideas being shared.

12.4.4 Processes of analysis – constraining and facilitating factors

The analysis of the data gathered has taken a long time especially given that the primary evidence gathering processes had been broadly completed within a single academic year. One reason for this delay was the time consuming nature of the transcription of audio evidence gathered in team meetings and interviews which included simultaneous translation from Welsh in to English. As transcription is widely recognised to be very time consuming my initial intention had been to fully transcribe audio data from each interview and partially transcribe data gathered in team meetings. However, experience showed that a greater understanding of team discourse emerged in the processes of making fuller transcriptions. For instance, I discovered that key moments of the team discussions were more likely to be revealed in comments spread through the discourse, and that discerning these subtle nuances and trends was difficult in less complete transcription processes.

Transcription was not only extremely demanding of time, but also was more effectively and efficiently undertaken in extended blocks of time which permitted full immersion in the data. Combining part time study with the demands of full time work severely restricted the availability of such opportunities. Overall, the sheer scale of the task meant that the process became extremely protracted. This significantly delayed the completion of the analysis. Nevertheless, once completed, it was clear that this immersion within the discourse of team meetings had supported the acquisition of very detailed knowledge and understandings of the data and that this greatly facilitated further tasks in the analysis.

12.4.5 Discursive approaches in Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT)

Qualitative analytical approaches predominate in the study. I have described the importance of the 'D' Analysis (Daniels 2010a, Middleton, 2010) approach to discourse analysis. Its value as a framework for the analysis of object oriented activity which highlighted trajectories of change presented an effective tool for the identification of key conversations which became pivotal moments for change. Using 'D' Analysis in the analysis of object oriented activity was illuminating particularly when illustrated by team member's comments. This represents a particular strength for the analysis of developments in object oriented activity. 'D' analysis approaches were also instrumental in highlighting shifts in my own role as a facilitator of change where the retrospective examinations of key excerpts revealed qualitative shifts in the nature of my contributions to discussions from initially affirming and encouraging comments such as in Excerpt 1 (p.113). In later discussions as the team became

established as in Excerpt 2 (p.143) my contributions would seek to summarise, reflect and clarify what had been said and to provide opportunities for shared reflection. Towards the end of our work together such as in Excerpt 3 (p.179) my contributions were more likely to question or challenge the team to review and clarify their thinking.

In contrast, the framework offered by Bernstein's (2003) notions of positioning, power and control using the concepts of 'classification' and framing (Daniels, 2010b) are less well developed in the study. Used simply to label junctures at which the team's isolation was reduced through networking at multiple levels where classification reduced (C⁻), and as the team's levels of autonomy grew where framing was decreased (F⁻) it's contribution to developing understandings of the team's development and the outcomes of its work was underdeveloped in the study and its value limited to the documentation of the surface characteristics of the team's development over the course of the present study.

12.4.6 Combining Qualitative and Quantitative approaches of analysis

I have described above some of the costs and benefits of undertaking fuller transcription in terms of the pace and momentum of the analysis. One significant benefit of this work was evident in the selection of key excerpts as exemplars for the quantitative analysis of shifts in participation over time. In addition, such detailed knowledge of the content of team discourse informed the selection of shared values about the benefits of team working and the degree to which they were shared by the team. Of themselves the quantitative elements of the analysis were rather limited in scope, but they offered supporting evidence, triangulation (Robson, 2002), to corroborate evidence emerging from qualitative analysis.

12.4.7 Completing and reporting the work – delays and their consequences

Overall, the research processes has been spread over six years. Such a delay could have been detrimental to the research as its data risked becoming dated. In fact, experience has shown that the delay has allowed elements of the team's work to come to fruition in time to be included in the thesis. For instance, the publication of early reading texts took place in 2011 and the oracy scheme is to be published and circulated to schools in Wales in 2013.

Recent communication with members of the team confirms that the value of the reading texts as an effective resource. However, their evaluations recognise that as they stand they offer insufficient support for early readers who require more finely

graduated reading materials to progress in their reading. The team are keen to write more reading books to fulfil these identified needs and intend to use existing funds to come together to undertake this work. The ongoing commitment of the team to undertake self identified projects to support their practice is evident in this determination. The team's continued engagement in developmental project work with local, regional and national partners are testament to the longevity of change processes that began within the context of the study.

12.5 CONTRIBUTION TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

12.5.1 Strengths, limitations and applicability – further research and enquiry

In the sections above I outlined key strengths and limitations of the thesis. The study has demonstrated that while self directed developmental project work may not resolve the circumstances which cause a marginal position, it may support practitioners to take action in response to the challenges they face. This notion suggests that active internal processes can bring about transformation through a creative process of adjusting to change in actively seeking alternative possibilities from among those available (Vasilyuk, 1991) to reconstruct new perspectives which are adjusted to the adjusted realities of the context.

The present study aimed to investigate how the team's work engenders change to strengthen its marginal position. It also aimed to consider how multifaceted practitioner identities may develop or be reconstructed and whether team members, through participation in joint action, are enabled to reconstruct professional identities as active agents for developing practice. I believe that the thesis highlights the ways in which the study effected change for this team and for their practice. In my opinion it provides an example of the development that is possible when educational psychologists to work in partnership with practitioners. It also illustrates the potential of such work as an effective tool to build capacity and empower practitioners to work together to effect change for their practice.

It has provided a really good model of how you can bring people together and have really sound outcomes as a result of it, working with an Educational Psychologist in partnership rather than as an expert working at a distance from them'. (Local Authority Inclusion Officer)

12.5.2 CONCLUDING THOUGHTS:

CHANGE AND EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

The changing economic climate for local authorities has implications for funding streams for the provision Educational Psychology Services in England and Wales. Typically, these constraints effect local authority decisions and priorities for the

provision of services. Experience has shown that this may tend towards a narrowing of understandings what may be provided. At the same time services are increasingly likely to be offering a traded service to schools and families. My own experience is that such decisions prioritise statutory work for individual learners over the provision of more systemic services to settings and teachers to build capacity and support professional development.

These pressures may mean that fewer opportunities for work using interventionist approaches may be possible under the auspices of local authority funding. Yet the present study has demonstrated the possibilities of developmental project work which harnesses the expertise, skills and motivation of practitioners to effect positive change for their own practice. It has demonstrated how this change may be cumulative and sustained and may extend beyond the confines of the local situation in which they arise. As educational psychology practice adapts to the changing economic climate there is a need to reconsider and reconceptualise the profession's understandings of how services may be delivered. Developmental work research processes such as those described in the thesis may have applications in the facilitation of collaborative creative work support such transitions.

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